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• AND •

FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

MARK MILTON'S MINE

OR A SCHOOLBOY'S INHERITANCE

AND OTHER STORIES

By A Self-Made Man



The tub had almost reached the bottom of the shaft when the rope broke, throwing Mark and his companions out. Riley was standing in the shaft looking on, and uttered an oath as he observed the failure of his plan to do away with the young mine owner.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

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Price 5 Cents.

Mark Milton's Mine

—OR—

A SCHOOLBOY'S INHERITANCE

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.

DAN MACRAISY AND HIS PAL.

"Half a year to-day, by the notches I've cut in this horse-trough, I've been boy-of-all-work at this road-house, and hang me, Sally, if I see what I've gained by it," said Bob Reynolds, in a discontented tone, as he emptied the fourth pail of water into the trough which he had brought from the well in a corner of the yard at the rear of the house.

"Gained by it!" ejaculated Sally Thompson, who officiated as maid-of-all-work at the road-house, which was no more than might be expected of a poor relation of Mr. and Mrs. Gummidge, who kept the road-house, which stood on the cliff road, running through a sparsely settled district, cut up into farms, between two Maine seacoast villages, one of which—the one which was just in sight two miles away—was called Sparbolt, and fringed the inner curve of a small, partly land-locked bay, the waters of which at that moment flashed in the rays of the setting sun. "Why, didn't you tell me two days ago that you had gained ten pounds?"

"Ten pounds!" sniffed Bob. "What's ten pounds?"

"Ten pounds is a lot for a boy. I wish I could say I had gained half as much, and I've been here more'n two years."

"Why don't you eat more?"

"I eat all I get. It ain't the fault of not eating."

"What is it, then?"

"Too much work. I'm a regular slave."

"Ain't I a slave, too?"

"You! Not by no means. You have an easy time of it 'long-side of me."

"I have? You're dreaming, Sally. Don't I get up at five in the morning with the dicky birds, and——"

"Ain't I up at five, too?"

"S'pose you are. It's healthy for a little girl like you to get up early. It makes you grow, and you need it. Now, I'm seventeen and almost a man."

"You won't be a man for five years yet."

"Five years! Where did you learn to count? I'll be able to vote in less than four years. Then I'll be a man."

"Well, I'm only one year younger than you. I could vote in five years."

"Women can't vote, you chump."

"I'll bet I could vote as good as you," cried Sally, with a toss of her head.

"Pooh! You wouldn't know the first thing about it. Women don't know anything about politics."

"What do you know about it?"

"I know all I want to know. I'll bet you don't know who's President of the United States."

"Theodore Roosevelt."

Sally was right, for Roosevelt had just succeeded to the Presidency on the recent death of William McKinley, a fact which will give the reader an idea of the date of this story.

"Well, you don't know who's Governor of this State," said Bob.

"I'm not worrying about it. Do you know?"

"Of course I know."

"Who?"

"Never mind. You're only a girl and don't need to know about such things."

"You don't know! You don't know! You don't know!" cried Sally, clapping her hands gleefully, and dancing about.

"I do know, but I ain't telling everything I know," growled Bob.

"You're only a bluffer. You've gained ten pounds in six months because you eat like a pig and do as little work about the place as you can."

"Don't you insult me, Sally Thompson! I won't stand for it."

"What'll you do?" asked Sally, mischievously.

"I'll tell my friend Mark Milton when he comes over. Now what are you blushing about?"

"I ain't blushing," protested the little girl, in some confusion.

"Yes, you are. Your face is as red as a peony."

"It's the sun."

"Sun be jiggered! You're stuck on Milton; but you needn't be. He's a gent and wouldn't look at a common girl-of-all-work like you."

"That's right. Sneer at me because I'm an orphan, and haven't any home but this place with my mother's cousin, which isn't a real home, because I have to work like a nigger from morning till night," cried the girl, the tears springing into her pretty eyes. "That's brave of you, Bob Reynolds. And you expect to be a man, and vote, in four years."

"I take it back, Sally. I didn't mean to hurt your feelings. Maybe Milton does think something of you," said Bob, in a penitent tone. "He's the finest boy that walks on two feet," continued Bob, energetically. "There's nothing stuck-up about him. He treats me just like a friend, though he's as superior to me as a racehorse is to a huxter's nag. That's the kind of fellow I like to run across. What I wouldn't do for him isn't worth talking about."

"I like to hear you talk that way, Bob," said Sally, wiping her eyes. "You have feelings after all."

"Sure I have. I may say hard things to you, Sally, but I wouldn't let anybody else do it. I'd punch 'em in the face," said Bob, squaring off at an imaginary adversary.

"Would you really, Bob?" said the girl, with a smile.

"Bet your life I would. I'd—hello! who's coming up the road?"

"A man and a boy."

"I see it's a man and a boy. Pretty free-and-easy looking chaps, don't you think?"

"I'll have to run in, and you'd better finish filling the trough, for if they should stop here your services will probably be needed."

"The man might stop for a drink at the bar, but as the village is only two miles off, they're not likely to stop here for supper, for they have plenty of time to reach Sparbolt."

Sally ran into the back yard and disappeared through the kitchen door.

Bob looked up the road at the two strangers.

The boy was lagging behind as if he was tired.

He was dressed in a cheap suit and wore a cap set rakishly over one ear.

The man was much better dressed.

His face was smoothly shaven and tanned by the weather.

His eyes were rather shifty, and the expression of his face was in keeping with his eyes.

He looked like an Irishman, and he whistled off and on as he came along.

Bob did not wait for them to arrive, but went for another bucket of water.

The man stopped at the water-trough and looked at the road-house.

"Peter Gummidge," he muttered, reading the sign over the door. "It's port we've struck at last. It's about time, faith, for I've nary a shot in the locker. I wonder if Peter will remember me? It won't be my fault if I don't prod his recollection. Sure he was a decent pal in his day, and we always stuck together like a pair of peapods. He appears to have come up in the world. So much the better for you, Dan Macraisy—Mr. O'Connor, I mane. If there was a listener around I might have put me fut in it, like the devil's imp, Jimmy Twitcher, that's forever behind like a cow's tail. I was a fool to take him in tow, and now I have him, it's afraid I am to shake the young villain, for he'd be sure to slip his gab, and that might put the police on me track, as well as get himself in limbo. Where the dickens is he now? Oh, there he is, sitting foreninst the hedge as if he owned the road. The devil burn the fellow! Jimmy—Jimmy Twitcher, is it coming ye are or not?"

The lad addressed as Jimmy Twitcher got up with an effort and came on.

"Now, Dan, vot's the use a 'urryin' a chap ven 'is legs is that tired that—"

"Ye young reprobate!" cried Macraisy, seizing the boy by the arm and shaking him. "Haven't I told you not to call me Dan in public, but Mr. O'Connor? Do ye want me to squeeze the wind out of you?"

"Blow the vind! It comes in 'ere at the back of me neck and goes hout through this 'ere 'ole 'ere in me helbow as if me jacket vos a public thoroughfare. Vot did you vant to take this 'ere road along the cliffs for ven ve could 'ave taken the hother von and been more comfortable?"

"Always grumbling, you young villain! Faith, it's amazed I am that I stand so much gab from ye. One of these fine nights when we're alone on a country road I'll forget meself and put a hole through that scone of yours."

"Blow me tight, vot a glorious death that would be, to be scragged by an 'igh tober like Dan Macraisy, who's vanted by the bobbies for heverything from 'ighvay robbery down to—"

"Blame you! Will you be quiet? Don't you see where we are?"

"Vell, vot of it? I honly vispered me sentiments."

"Look on that sign."

"Vell, I'm a-lookin'."

"You remember me telling you about me old pal, Peter Gummidge, don't you?"

"Vot, you don't mean to say 'e's the howner of this 'ere 'ouse?"

"He is."

"Then dash my vig, ve've landed on our feet. I begin to feel a svell meal insinervatin' itself under me veskit—the first I've 'ad since ve left Bostin. Vot luck! Let's go in and interduce hourselves vidout loss of time. Me stomach is that hempty it's full of vind like a balloon."

"One minute. There may be strangers inside, so we've got to be cautious, do ye mind that. Remember, you villain, that my name is O'Connor, and that I'm a gentleman of leisure, wid money, traveling for me health, and that ye are a poor relation I've taken in tow out of the generosity of me heart. That's

your story now, so see that ye stick to it, or by the piper that played before Jericho, I'll be the death of you, which would save the hangman a job one of these fine days."

"Don't vorry, Dan—Mister O'Connor, vich I meant to say, with a fine meal in sight I von't say nothink I 'adn't houghter."

"See that ye don't. Now follow me in."

"Like a bird," said Jimmy, and the rascally pair entered the public room of the road-house just as Bob brought another pail of water to the trough.

CHAPTER II.

GUMMIDGE MEETS HIS OLD PAL.

There was no one in the public room of the road-house when the disreputable twain walked in with all the assurance in the world.

Macraisy pounded on the bar with one of his fists.

No one responded.

"Are they all dead here, or is it dafe they are?" ejaculated the Irishman, staring at the back door. "Go to that door and thump on it, do ye hear?" he added, addressing his companion.

Jimmy walked over, and was about to pound on the door, when it opened and Sally appeared in the opening.

"Oh, crickey, vot a purty gal! How are you, miss? Ve—Mr. O'Connor and me—are lookin' for the landlord of the 'ouse. Vill you kindly let him know as 'ow a couple of werry respectable travelers vishes to sample 'is 'ospitality?"

"Mr. Gummidge is out in the barn. If you want drinks, I can serve you," said the girl, starting for the bar.

"Vell, I wouldn't mind drinkin' to them bloomin' heyes of yours, miss," grinned Jimmy, "if Mr. O'Connor is villin' to stand treat. I'm honly a poor relation of 'is, travelin' vid 'im hout of the generosity of 'is 'eart. 'E's von of them real gents—toffers, they call 'em on the other side—vot you read about, who's investigatin' the country for the benefit of 'is 'ealth."

Sally turned up her nose at Twitcher and presented herself before Macraisy.

"What can I do for you, sir?" she asked.

Dan regarded her with an admiring eye.

"Are ye Peter Gummidge's daughter, may I ask?" he said.

"No, sir. What will you have to drink?"

"Then it's the bar maid ye are."

"I'm the house maid. I attend to the bar when Mr. Gummidge is away or busy outside."

"And is Mr. Gummidge away at present? What a pity! Sure it's an old frind of his I am, and he'd be glad to see me, sure he would. When do ye expict him back?"

"He is not away, sir. He's busy out in the barn. If you particularly wish to see him I will tell him."

"Do so by all means, me charmer. Tell him Mr. O'Connor, an old friend, is waiting to shake hands wid him, and renew old memories."

Sally said she would, and started for the door.

Jimmy had, in the meanwhile, subsided into a chair.

He looked longingly at the corner of the bar on which stood a plate of cheese, another of crackers, and a third of sliced beef.

As Sally shut the door after her, he followed her with his eyes.

Then he looked at Macraisy, who was leaning upon the bar with his eyes on the road.

The way to the free lunch appeared to be clear, and Jimmy took instant advantage of it.

He glided over to it and helped himself with the avidity of a hungry boy.

"Oh, mother!" he breathed. "Vot a helegant lay-hout. If I honly 'ad something to drink now, I'd be as 'appy as a clam at 'igh vater."

Then Macraisy turned around and looked at him.

"What are you doing, ye villain?" he cried.

"Heatin'. Me innards are that hempty—the valls of me stomick was on the p'int of fallin' in, like a 'ouse 'ose under-pinnin' vos shaky. Now if you would stand for a mug of 'arf-and-'arf, you'd do the right thing, Dan—Mr. O'Connor, I meant to say."

"Get back to your seat before Gummidge comes or he'll think you're robbing him."

"Vy, I'm only ministerin' to the vants of nature," protested Jimmy, clinging to the corner of the bar, for he hated to leave the banquet.

"Sit down!" roared Macraisy, in a threatening tone.

Jimmy swept a bunch of meat and crackers into one of his capacious pockets and glided back to his chair.

At that moment Peter Gummidge entered the room.

He had a smooth face, an easy fitting suit and an air of moderate prosperity.

He came forward to greet the caller who claimed to be an old friend.

The name O'Connor, however, carried no recollection with it.

He could not help wondering who the man was, and under what circumstances of the past they had been friends.

He passed around behind the bar, and then Macraisy looked at him.

"Mr. O'Connor, I believe," he began, and the next words he was about to utter died on his lips.

There was that in his visitor's eye which recalled the man's identity, and he turned pale.

"Dan Macraisy!" he gurgled.

Dan grinned.

"Shake, Peter. It's Dan, sure enough, though for reasons which ye may guess, I'm masquerading under the name of O'Connor—it's safer. It's glad I am to see ye once more after six years of separation. But what's the matter with ye? You don't look happy. Do ye doubt me identity?"

"No, no," cried Gummidge, hastily.

"Thin shake, man!"

"No, no; we must be strangers."

"Strangers, is it? Sure it's joking ye are. Ye can't have forgotten how ye grasped this old limb years ago, as if your heart were in your hand, and vowed ye'd share me good or evil fortune. And to prove it ye stuck by me till I was pinched for the Golding job, which ye had the good luck to slip out of yourself, the more power to ye, for a smart chap ye proved yourself at the time, and that was the last we saw of each other till me lucky star guided me to ye ag'in, and I find ye proprietor of a house of entertainment, and it's meself that congratulates ye on your good fortune."

Gummidge, clearly ill at ease, stared fixedly at his old pal, whom he had hoped never to set eyes on again.

Jimmy Twitcher was not such a dummy but he saw that his companion was not so welcome as he had anticipated.

Fearing that their stay would be brief, and that he would lose the banquet he had been figuring on, he decided to slip away and see what he could pick up about the house in a quiet way, for Jimmy was a most accomplished sneak thief—that being as high as his talents soared, though he often dreamed of accomplishing a burglary or highway robbery some day when he grew older and more experienced.

With that object in view the young crook glided over to the back door and vanished through it like a shadow flitting across a patch of sunshine.

"Look you, Macraisy—I vowed that when blinded by guilt; but I've seen my error, and have turned over a new leaf."

Macraisy stared at him in astonishment.

"Ye have turned over a new leaf—you have! Is it draming I am or do I translate your words aright? Why, man alive, ye were as fine a high tober as iver stood on two fate. Faith, it's gammon ye are giving me, Peter Gummidge. Turn over a new leaf, bedad! It isn't in ye, no more than it's in a leopard to change his spots. I'd as soon suspect meself of turning parson as ye of becoming honest."

"It's true," replied Gummidge, in a hoarse whisper.

Macraisy gave him a hard, unbelieving look.

"May I take the liberty of an old friend and ask ye how this miracle has come about? Sure, it's flabbergasted I am to hear it from your own lips."

Gummidge hesitated and cast an uneasy look toward the door.

Macraisy noticed his action and looked at the door, too, but it was shut.

"In Hivin's name, man, what's the matter wid ye? Ye're as changed as a lobster after it's been b'ling in a pot. Speak, for it's puzzled I am entirely."

"I'm sorry you have come here, Dan," said the landlord, in a troubled voice. "I can't forget that once we were old friends—pals, and perhaps for that reason my heart warms toward you; but you must go—go, do you understand?" he added, with energy. "She must not meet you."

"She! Who do ye mane?"

"My wife—as fine a woman as ever lived."

Macraisy whistled.

"So that's the way the wind blows, is it?" he said. "There's a woman back of it, eh? I might have suspicioned it, for the sex have always been the ruination of man from the days of Adam down. So ye are married?"

"Yes."

"Then it's my sympathy I extind to ye. How did it happen, me old friend?"

"Soon after we parted—you were sent up for ten years, while

I escaped detection, though I didn't go back on you, as you should remember—I met and courted a woman in whom I found virtue was not a name, but part and parcel of herself; and the force of example has wrought a greater change in me than all the sermons that were ever preached. Still, unknown to her, and tempted by the love of gain, I occasionally followed my old courses, till I had amassed a sum sufficient to purchase this old road-house, then I quit for good the business which, more than once, brought me under the shadow of a felon's cell. That's the whole story, and I am bound to say life has gone easier with me ever since."

"That's a very fine story, Peter, but it isn't me that would fall to a woman's wiles in that same way, do ye mind. However, I'm not going to quarrel wid ye about it. Ye have the right to suit yourself, and as ye always did the right thing by me, I won't cross ye now. But one thing I ask ye—shelter for the night for meself and that cub of mine behind me. We made it."

"What cub?"

"Sure that young pal I brought along wid me, and it's an eyesore he is to me, bad luck to the young ruffian."

Macraisy turned around to indiacte Jimmy, but Jimmy, as the reader knows, was not there.

"Where in thunder has the villian gone? He was seated at that table a moment ago."

"He must have walked outside while we were talking."

"Maybe he did, but I didn't see him do it. Well, ye'll kape us for the night and give us a good supper and breakfast, wid a dollar or two in the morning to see us on our way, eh?"

"I'll do that, of course, for old times' sake, Dan," said Gummidge, reluctantly.

"Whist now, ye must drop the Dan. I'm Mr. O'Connor, an Irish gentleman, traveling under the doctor's orders afoot for me health. I've sunk me rale name bekase (I'll trust ye wid me sacret) I've escaped from the State prison, and the officers are beating up the country after me. I came down this way to throw dust in their eyes, seeing as they have an idea I'm bound the other way."

"Then you haven't served all your time?"

"No. I had two years more on me hands, and as it wasn't to me taste I took advantage of the first chance to give the place the slip."

"If you should be caught here I am likely to get in trouble for harboring you."

"Not at all, for how should ye know who I am? Anyway, it's a small risk for ye to take for old times' sake."

"Let it go. You shall have a room and your meals for yourself and your companion, on one condition."

"What is that?"

"That we treat each other as strangers lest my wife——"

"Be it so, Peter. It's safe for me. Ye can introduce me to your wife as Mr. O'Connor, a gentleman you knew before you met her, and thin she will have no reason to suspect that I ain't as respectable as yerself."

"Very well. Make yourself at home. I will have dinner served shortly in your room."

"Why in me room?"

"Because I shall have company in the dining-room in an hour or so."

"Company, is it? Ain't I good enough to mate your company?"

"It's a private party. A lawyer is to meet and dine with a lad from the private school in this neighborhood. The boy has finished his education and has reached his eighteenth year, when he is to receive the legacy left him by his father."

"Legacy, is it?" said the Irishman, pricking up his ears. "And he gets it here to-night, does he? Sure he's a fortunate b'y, so he is. It would do me a power of good to make his acquaintance."

"No, no, Dan. You mustn't interfere with him. He's a fine boy, and nothing must happen to him."

"Sure, why should anything happen to him? What name does he sail under?"

"Mark Milton. His father was a prospector out West, and when he died left him the title deed to a mine, which, I understand, is valuable."

"Thin his legacy isn't in the shape of money?"

"I believe there is some money coming to him, but his inheritance is really the mine."

"And the lawyer is to settle wid him to-night?"

"That's the arrangement. He comes from the school and the lawyer from the village. They meet here, dine, and after the business is over he will return to school, pack his trunk and leave to-morrow for the West."

"Pass out the bottle, Peter, and we'll drink to his health. A b'y wid a fine legacy in prospect is an object to be toasted."

Gummidge placed two glasses on the bar and handed out a whisky bottle.

"Here's hoping the schoolboy's inheritance will lade him to fortune," said Macraisy, with a shifty glint in his eyes.

As he raised the glass to his lips a loud howl burst upon their ears.

CHAPTER III.

MARK MILTON AND HIS TRUSTEE.

The back door of the public room opened with a bang, and Jimmy Twitcher shot in, followed by a good-looking, athletic young fellow, with Sally at his heels.

"Wow!" cried Jimmy, as he started to pick himself up.

In this operation he was assisted by the boy behind, who grabbed him by the collar and yanked him on his legs.

"Oh, I say, go heasy, will you?" protested Jimmy. "I hain't no punchin' bag."

"You're a sneak thief, that's what you are, and I'll see that you land in the lock-up," said the boy, who was Mark Milton, the schoolboy hero of our story.

"Powder me blue, if I hever 'eard the like. I never boned nothin' in me 'ull life, so 'elp me bob."

"What a liar you are!" cried Sally. "Didn't I catch you in the missus' room looking through the drawers of her dresser?"

"Vell, vot of it? Me and me pal—Mr. O'Connor I meant to say—is goin' to stop 'ere to-night, and I vos just pickin' hout a room to suit 'im, for 'e's that partic'lar 'e must 'ave vot suits 'im or 'e gets a-vaikin' in 'is sleep, vich is bad for 'im, as 'e's hunder the doctor's horders."

"Hello, what's the trouble?" said Macraisy, stepping forward.

Mark explained that Sally had caught Jimmy in Mrs. Gummidge's chamber rifling the draws of her dresser.

"I found this coral necklace in his pocket," added Mark. "He's a thief."

"It must 'ave fallen into me pocket by haxident," said Jimmy.

"The idea! Just as if it could," sniffed Sally.

"There must be some mistake," said Macraisy. "The young man is my traveling companion, and it's meself that'll vouch for him."

"There, do you 'ear that?" grinned Jimmy. "Vhy, I'm that respectable butter wouldn't melt in me mouth. That's vot me grandmother used to say, and she vos a verry religious old lady who always vent to meetin' on Sundays."

"If this chap is your traveling companion, sir, I'd keep a sharp eye on him, or he and some of your property may be missing some day," said Mark. "If I was Mr. Gummidge, I'd hand him over to the village constable."

"Faith, young man, it's mighty free ye are wid your advice. Perhaps ye'll let me know whom I have the honor of addressing?" said Macraisy.

"My name, sir, is Milton, Mark Milton."

"Indade! Thin ye are the young gent who——"

"Hush!" cried Gummidge, in a hoarse whisper. "Are you mad?"

"Sir!" said Mark, in some astonishment.

"I was about to say that ye are the young gent who is bringing this charge against me poor relative. Under the circumstances, it's me juty to confess that me companion is not quite right in his head. Ever since he was sunstruck he has been subject to doing odd things. I regret that he intruded where he had no right to go, and I apologize for that same. Sit down at that table, ye bone of contention, and if ye move out of your sate before I say the word, I'll not be responsible for what happens to you," said Macraisy, pushing Jimmy into a chair.

Mark looked at the Irishman rather doubtfully.

To say the truth, he did not take much stock in his statement.

He was satisfied that Jimmy Twitcher was a sneak thief, and he thought Mr. Gummidge ought to take some action in the matter.

As the landlord showed no disposition to do so, he didn't feel called on to proceed further.

It wasn't his house, and Jimmy hadn't stolen anything from him.

The uproar had brought Bob Reynolds to the front door, so Mark joined him on the porch, while Sally returned to the kitchen to inform Mrs. Gummidge what had taken place.

After a brief interchange of words, in which Gummidge implored Macraisy to be cautious and to keep his pal within

bounds, the landlord went back to arrange for the temporary accommodation of his unwelcome visitors.

The Irishman read the riot act to Jimmy, and the boy promised to behave.

Darkness was falling by this time, and Bob entered the public room and lighted the lamps.

Sally was in the dining-room setting the table there for the dinner which Lawyer Peabody had invited Mark Milton to.

She felt quite down in the mouth because the schoolboy was going to leave that neighborhood for the wild and woolly West where his mine was.

Mark had been very kind to her ever since he grew friendly with Bob, and came over frequently to the road-house to see him.

She was well treated by Mrs. Gummidge, who was a good Christian woman, but for all that she had to work very hard, for which she only received her board and clothes, and a small sum for spending money, and so she was impressed with the idea that she was being imposed upon because she was an orphan and a distant relative.

She and Bob were always scrapping and making up again, but never an unkind word came from Mark, nor an insinuation that she wasn't as good as he was himself.

"He's just as good as gold," she often told herself. "How I do love him! I wish he was my brother."

About the time Lawyer Peabody arrived, Bob showed Macraisy and Jimmy to their room in a wing of the house, and immediately afterward brought up their supper on a tray and laid it out on a table.

"Vot a plummy supper!" ejaculated Jimmy, his eyes bulging when they rested on a plate of ham and eggs, another of fried sliced potatoes, a loaf of bread partially cut in slices, a plate of butter, two cups of coffee, and two large slices of pie. "Blow me tight, if this 'ere hain't a layhout for a hemperor. Vill I 'elp meself, Dan? I'm that 'ungry that me tongue is 'angin' hout."

"I'll help you. Pass your plate. There are four eggs, faith, wid their yellow bellies turned to the sky. Seeing as I'm twice as big as you, three will be about right for me, wid two-thirds of the ham," said Macraisy.

"Oh, mother, do you vant me to faint? Vot's von egg to a growin' boy like me? Vhy, I wouldn't know I vos heatin' it."

"Well, thin, to kape your mouth shut, ye shall have two, wid a fair half of the ham, and I'll order more."

"Dat's right, Dan. Horder it all hover ag'in. If I vas alone I could heat the 'ull layhout and t'ink nothink of it."

Macraisy helped Jimmy, and they proceeded to eat like the brace of hungry folks they were.

The Irishman considered the repast sufficient, and though Jimmy eyed the empty ham and eggs plate longingly, he had to content himself with the rest of the bread and butter, and the pie.

Soon after they had finished, Bob came up for the tray and dishes.

"Well, you chaps didn't leave much," he said, viewing the empty appearance of things.

"Would you if you vos as 'ungry as two hourang-houtangs?" replied Jimmy.

"You must have walked some ways to-day."

"Vell, you can take your oath ve did. Vhy——"

"Choke off," interposed Macraisy. "Have you got such a thing as a newspaper in the house, may I ask?"

"We have the Sparbolt News, published yesterday, and the Boston Post, which comes every morning," said Bob.

"Bring the Boston paper. Sure it's the latest intelligence I am always looking for."

"I will fetch it presently," said Bob, gathering up the dishes.

In ten minutes he brought the newspaper and handed it to Macraisy.

"Is there hanythink in it about us?" ventured Jimmy after Bob had gone.

"Are ye anxious to know, bedad?" grinned the crook.

"I always feels better ven I 'ave the hidea that the bobbies aren't troublin' their 'eads habout me."

"Don't worry, me boy. It's of small importance ye are to the police. Ye might get six months or so if they got hold of you. A mere bagatelle, faith. But wid me it's different. I've broken jail, and the laste I can explet is me full sintence widout me rebate; and I belave there's another indictment out agin me on which I can be tried, wid the prospect of five or six years more."

"Oh, mother! If I 'ad dat 'angin' hover me 'ead I'd ship for furrin' parts as quick as a vink, so 'elp me bob."

"Shut up now and let me read the news."

Jimmy pulled a small black pipe out of his pocket, filled the

bowl with the stray bits of tobacco he found in his vest pocket, and began to smoke with his feet on the table.

At the end of fifteen minutes Macraisy threw the paper on the table and said he was going down to take the air.

"Don't ye move out of here while I'm away or it'll be worse for ye, that's me advice to ye."

"Me move! Why, I'm dat tired I couldn't lift vun foot over t'other."

"I'll be back in ten minutes, and I hope to find ye aslape."

Macraisy walked out of the room, but not to take the air.

He was bound for the entry outside of the dining-room to see what he could find out about the young schoolboy and his mining inheritance.

If there was a batch of money connected with it, and the lawyer passed it over to him that night, Mr. Macraisy knew what his plan of action would be.

In any event, he hoped to make something out of the young heir if he had to follow him all the way out West, which was a promising country for gentlemen of the Macraisy stamp.

Mark Milton and Lawyer Peabody had finished their dinner, and all the dishes had been removed from the table, when the rascally Irishman ensconced himself outside of the entry door, and alternately applied his ear and his eye to the keyhole, which commanded an excellent, though limited, view of the interior of the room.

One of Macraisy's ears was constantly on the alert against possible interruption and discovery from the direction of the kitchen on the one hand and the public room on the other.

He was poised on his tiptoes so that he could assume a perpendicular attitude in the fraction of a moment, and he depended on his ready wit, which seldom failed him in an emergency, to account for his presence in the entry in the event that he was surprised there.

He was in no great danger, however, for when Bob Reynolds removed the last of the dishes, the lawyer requested him to see that he and his young friend were not disturbed, as they had business of importance to transact.

As Lawyer Peabody had previously given similar directions to Mr. Gummidge, that individual was not likely to intrude on them, particularly as he had no business in the kitchen, while he had quite a bit of business to attend to in the public room.

Bob and Sally were eating their supper in the kitchen, and talking about Mark Milton, while Mrs. Gummidge had gone to her room by way of the back stairs.

"My young friend," said Lawyer Peabody to Mark, "you are eighteen years old to-day."

"Yes, sir," replied the lad, with a smile.

"I congratulate you on your birthday, and I wish you a long and prosperous life, toward which everything seems to point, for you are blessed with a good constitution, have acquired a very fair education, and are on the point of taking hold of an inheritance which promises a fortune."

"Thank you, sir."

"This inheritance, as you have already been informed, consists of a mining property, located in Blank County, in the State of Colorado. It is on the outskirts of a mining camp called Poker Flat, a rough hamlet in a pocket of the mountain range. The camp did not exist at the time your father went prospecting through the district, but it came into being as soon as the news spread to the county seat, twenty odd miles away, that he had discovered gold and silver in the pocket. Fortunately, he staked out all the ground permitted one man by law before the rush began, and the gold seekers who came after him took up claims all around his own. Having registered his claims, he proceeded to do the preliminary work of excavation required by the mining law, and then he secured his title deed to the property, which was duly recorded in the county clerk's office at Silver Plume. I have here a certified copy of the deed. Although your father died without making a will, you being heir at law, the property naturally passed to you, though not directly, owing to the fact of you being a minor. The court appointed me trustee to act for you until you became of age. Although you will not attain your majority for three years yet, and during that interval the title will not actually devolve upon you, the time has come when, prompted by expert opinion, I have deemed it advisable for your interests to place you in nominal possession of the property. You are now through your schooling, and must take a serious view of life. I have decided that since it is out of the question for me to go West and take charge of your interests, the next best thing is for you to go there yourself and start the ball rolling. The mines all about your property are doing well, and there is no reason why the Milton Mine should not also become a producer under proper management. I have received several offers to dispose of the property, any one of

which, with the authority of the court, I have the right to accept; but I have turned them all down as not being for your best interests. I may say that a number of attempts have been made to jump your claims by unscrupulous persons who produced forged deeds and alleged bills of sale. Several rascals were in possession a number of months, long enough to sink a shaft, and bore a couple of short tunnels, before I was advised of the state of affairs. I took measures to oust them, but I have lately received word that they are hovering around the Flat with the view of taking advantage of the deserted state of things to renew their efforts. It is, therefore, vitally necessary that some one should be on the scene to protect the property, and since I cannot go, you must," said the lawyer.

"I am ready to go there, sir," said Mark. "I have already told you that."

"Yes, and the matter is settled in my mind. You shall have authority from me, as your trustee, to work the mine, and once you get things in operation, I do not believe you will be molested by outside influences. Here is the paper I have drawn up empowering you to act as your judgment dictates," and Mr. Peabody laid another document on top of the copy of the deed.

"Thank you, sir."

"All this business I should have transacted with you at my office, but for the fact that I have been called upon to defend an important action which comes to trial at Rockland to-morrow, and is likely to keep me away from Sparbolt for a week. Sooner than delay your departure I decided to have you meet me here and have the matter over with. You will need money for your expenses, and a sum to enable you to start operations at Poker Flat. Here is \$100 to pay your way out West and meet any small emergency expenditures, and here is a draft on the Silver Plume National Bank for \$900. You will kindly sign that receipt acknowledging having received from me the sum of \$1,000, as I shall need it as a voucher in the final settlement of my trusteeship."

Mark took the bills and the draft, and signed the paper.

"I think that is all now, and I wish you every success in your business operations. Write me as often as you can, for as your trustee it is necessary I should be kept fully informed as to how matters are going on about the property."

"I will, sir."

"Very good. I will walk with you as far as your school, and then wish you God-speed on your journey. You are on the point of entering upon a new life—a life wholly different from what you have been accustomed to; and you are about to assume grave responsibilities, on which your future largely depends; but I am not afraid of the result. You are a bright, courageous and enterprising boy—a true type of a young American. You will not fail to meet my expectations—I feel that in my bones—and so I send you forth into this new world to fight your own way, confident that you will meet the issue as your father met it and—win."

They rose and clasped hands across the table, while outside the door the spying Irishman, satisfied there was nothing more to learn, glided away from the spot, his brain filled with a rascally design he intended to put in immediate operation.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CRIME ON THE ROAD.

Macraisy returned to his room and was pleased to find that his companion, overcome with fatigue, had fallen asleep as he sat at the table.

He went to the window and looked out.

During the last hour the sky had gradually clouded up, and there were indications in the air of an approaching thunder storm.

The storm was coming in from the Atlantic, the waters of which were beating against the base of the long line of cliffs in that neighborhood.

The road-house was about half a mile from the edge of the cliffs, and on a level with them.

From the roof, on a sunny day, one could catch a view of the broad, sparkling sea, and on a bright moonlight night the same was possible.

On this occasion Macraisy could make out nothing but a dark void, frequently lighted up for a moment by red streaks of lightning, while to his ears came the muttered growl of thunder, gradually growing louder and more ominous.

"Tis a fine night, faith, for an enterprise that calls for a little nerve and expedition," he muttered, with a glance over his shoulder at the sleeping Jimmy. "For once that young imp is safe from interfering wid me plans. I want no witness to me actions to-night. A hundred dollars and a bank draft I

may be able to turn to advantage is too good to let get by me. And thin the mine. It will be a cold day, Dan Macraisy, whin ye can't make something of your opportunities. The West is the place to hide meself in. I'm not safe East wid the officers on me track. If I could only shake me companion all would be plain sailing. It's a fool ye were to take the likes of him in tow. That's what I get for having a soft heart for a pal in the dumps."

He crossed over to the table and turned the lamp low.

"Perhaps I'd better remove it to that bureau. The fool might get the nightmare over that swell feed he's had and kick it over, and thin the house would go up and leave Peter on his uppers once more."

He changed the position of the lamp, then gliding to the door, opened it and listened.

The only sounds came in a subdued way from the public room, where a party of farmers were drinking and having a good time after the labors of the day.

He shut the door, and would have locked it if he could.

Then he went to the window and opened it cautiously.

A gust of cool wind blew in and flowed around Jimmy Twitcher's head.

He moved in his chair and muttered in his sleep.

Macraisy shut the window, grabbed a towel and threw it over the back of the sneak thief's head.

Returning to the window, he opened it again and cautiously got out.

A brilliant flash of lightning threw his figure into momentary relief, then it died out.

When the next flash came the window was shut and the Irishman was standing on the roof of the kitchen addition below.

At the same moment Mark Milton and Lawyer Peabody were standing at the door of the public room talking to Mr. Gummidge.

They were debating whether they could reach their several destinations before the storm swept over the landscape.

Mark had persuaded the legal gentleman not to go out of his way to see him to the school, which was but half a mile or so away, while the lawyer lived on the suburbs of the village about a mile in the opposite direction.

"I can easily get to the school by walking smartly across the fields before the storm gets here," said the boy. "By going through the little wood I will save a quarter of a mile. That much is lost by the bend in the road."

"I am sorry I didn't drive here," said the lawyer; "but the evening looked so pleasant, and as the walk was to be preferred after a long day in the office, why, I came that way."

"Better start, Mr. Peabody," said Mark. "We are gaining nothing by standing here figuring over our chances."

They bade the landlord good-night and stepped into the road.

"I'll be over in the morning to bid you all good-by," said Mark to Gummidge.

"We'll look for you," replied the landlord, taking a look at the dark sky and going back to the bar, where his services were in demand.

Mark and Lawyer Peabody were swallowed up in the darkness, but a minute later an electric flash showed them parting in the middle of the road.

A crash of thunder followed, awaking the echoes of the firmament, and showing how rapidly the storm was coming that way.

The lawyer went on toward the village as fast as he could, while Mark hurried in the opposite direction.

From the gloom of the road-house yard shot a tall, athletic figure.

It was Macraisy on the trail of his victim.

He was just in time to see the boy and the lawyer going in different directions.

He was not near enough to distinguish one from the other, but having the idea that the school was near the village, he hurried after Lawyer Peabody, believing he was the lad he aimed to do up.

Having longer legs than the little legal gentleman, he rapidly overtook him.

The lightning flashes showed the lawyer at intervals ahead, but did not disclose his real identity to the crook.

Macraisy saw that by crossing a corner of a field he would come out ahead of his supposed victim, and he adopted that plan.

He came out on the road where a great oak tree threw its shadow in the sunshine half way across the road.

A flash of lightning showed him the lawyer hustling along on that side of the road, and only a short distance away.

He drew a slung-shot and crouched beside the tree trunk.

As the advancing shadow came up and was passing the tree, Macraisy sprang upon him like a tiger.

A blow, and Lawyer Peabody sank senseless to the ground with a groan.

"'Tis done. Now for the money and the draft, and the deed of the mine as well," he cried. "Sure this will be a fine night's job for me, and no one will ever be the wiser, faith."

As he bent over the little man a brilliant flash illuminated the road and the surrounding landscape, and a terrible crash shattered the sky above.

Then Macraisy saw the lawyer's features, and he started back aghast.

"Thunder and turf! I've killed the wrong party," he gasped.

The light went out and he stared at the motionless shadow at his feet.

"Bad luck on me stupidity!" he gritted. "It's ill luck that's on me to-night whin I thought me fortune was made. What shall I do now? The b'y has escaped, and it's too late to catch him now. The school must be in the opposite direction, and sure I thought it was close to the village ahead. Bad cess to me brains! They never deceived me before. Well, I can't stay here crying over spilled milk. Let me see what the feller has in his clothes. A few dollars is better than nothing."

While he went through his victim's pockets the lightning flashed and the thunder rolled louder than ever.

Macraisy transferred the lawyer's wallet, watch and cuff-buttons to his pockets with the celerity of one accustomed to the business, then springing up he abandoned the senseless man and started back hurriedly for the road-house.

The first rain-drops were falling when he glided into the yard of the road-house hostelry and made for the kitchen extension.

Springing upon the rim of a big water butt, he gained the roof, threw up the window of his room and re-entered the house.

A flash of lightning and a crash of thunder accompanied him.

The latter aroused the sleeping Jimmy, and the young thief started up.

"Vhy, Dan, vere have you been?" he asked, seeing the hat on his companion's head, and noticing the man's rumpled appearance.

"Been, ye thafe of the night!" roared Macraisy, seizing him by the throat and forcing him back in the chair. "Nowhere, but looking out of the windy at the storm. Don't ye dare whisper that I've been anywhere. What would I be doing out on such a night wid a comfortable room at me disposal?"

"Oh, mother! Don't scragg me! I never seen you look that way before, Dan. I 'ope you ain't took a fit. Let go me neck or you'll 'ave all the wind hout of me, and vill 'ave to hanswer for me death."

That brought Macraisy to his senses, and he let go of his companion.

"Don't mind me," he said, flinging his hat on the floor. "It's dazed I was by the thunder and lightning, and I grabbed ye widout knowing what I was doing."

"Vell, don't do it ag'in. I never felt so like I 'ad a 'alter 'round me neck before. I shall never feel heasy after this ven I read of a 'angin'. It vill give me a crick in me neck."

"Shut up and come to bed. It's time we turned in for the night."

Five minutes later both were under the sheets, while the storm was howling like mad around the road-house, the wind shaking the window-pane which faced seaward and the rain pouring down in a perfect flood.

A quarter of a mile down the road the pitiless storm was beating down on the white, upturned face of Lawyer Peabody, who had fallen a victim to a scoundrel's error.

And there he lay for an hour, when he was found by a party of farmhands on their way back from the village after the storm had spent its rapid course and gone on its way inland.

They bore him to the road-house, where his unexpected return in such a condition was viewed by the landlord with astonishment.

He was brought to his senses and found not to be badly hurt.

He declared he had been assaulted by a big man in the dark, who had sprung upon him unexpectedly from behind the big oak.

Who the man was he could not say, for the night was too dark for him to identify him.

That he had been robbed was easily proven by his missing watch, cuff-buttons and wallet.

It happened, however, that in his clenched hand had been found a slight clew—a bit of necktie torn from the rascal who did him up.

This was shown to Gummidge by one of the farmhands, who told him to turn it over to the constable in the morning, as it might lead to the detection of the footpad who was guilty of the deed.

The landlord examined it curiously, and then his face paled.

"Dan wears a tie like that," he breathed, a deadly fear gripping his heart at the thought of the consequences that might weave themselves about himself if his old pal was apprehended for the crime. "Can it be that he is the guilty party?"

Lawyer Peabody was put to bed after his wound was bound up, and Gummidge hastened to close his house.

He remained in the bar-room for nearly an hour, a prey to acute reflections, then taking the lamp in his hand, he went upstairs.

Pausing at the door of his guests' room, he softly turned the handle and slipped inside.

He flashed the light around until it rested on the bed.

Macraisy and Jimmy were fast asleep, and had apparently been so for some time.

Putting down the lamp, the landlord fumbled over Macraisy's garments till he fished out the tie.

One end of it had been torn off, and the piece Gummidge held in his fingers fitted in the break to a nicety.

"The scoundrel!" breathed the landlord. "He is the man. I must save him for my own sake."

He put the tie in his pocket, intending to destroy it.

Then he went through the Irishman's pockets and found all the stolen property.

Shaking his fist at his old pal, he turned and left the room as noiselessly as he entered it.

CHAPTER V.

THE ARREST.

Morning broke warm and bright over the neighborhood, and the sunshine resting on Macraisy's face awoke him.

He sat up.

"Where am I, at all at all?" he ejaculated. "Ah, I remember now. At Peter Gummidge's road-house, wid a warm breakfast in prospect, please the pigs!"

Then came the remembrance of his crime of the night before.

"I must take the money out of the wallet and hide the thing somewhere. The watch and cuff-buttons I must conceal about me. Me shoes will be the best place. There will be a stir around here whin the body is found. But maybe I didn't kill him. Faith, I hope not, for I've nothing agin the old chap. I gave him an awful crack, though, in me hurry. Ah, well, it can't be helped now that the deed is done. Suspicion won't fall on me, for no one saw me lave the house. I wonder if Peter will suspect me? Let him. He dare not breathe a hint. He knows that a word from me would spoil all his fine prospects and land him in jail as me old pal, in the Golding and other clever jobs. That would break his wife's heart. Well, sure it isn't me that wants to get him in trouble. He's safe enough as long as he holds his gab. Now to attend to business before that young thafe wakes up."

Macraisy sprang out of bed and seized his trousers.

He dressed himself in a hurry.

"Where the dickens is me tie? Sure I can't find it at all at all. Niver mind for the prisint. The pocketbook first."

But to the Irishman's amazement the results of his crime had vanished completely.

"By the hoof of Balaam's rabbit, where have they gone to? Did I drop thim along the road? Sure there isn't any hole in me pockets. Holy murder! did I have all me trouble for nothing? And where the mischief is the tie?"

Macraisy was satisfied he couldn't have lost that, too.

He sat on the bed and stared in perplexity at the wall.

Finally he picked up Jimmy's tie and put it on, for he couldn't show himself without one.

Macraisy decided that something was wrong, and it behooved him and his companion to get on their way before the investigation was begun over the lawyer.

"Get up, ye limb of Satan," he cried, shaking Jimmy into wakefulness.

"Vot's the matter, Dan? Has the 'ouse took fire?" asked the boy.

"You'll take fire if you don't get into your clothes in a jiffy."

Jimmy knew better than to dally when Dan spoke that way, and he tumbled out.

"Vere's me tie?" he said, looking around for it. "Vhy, if you hain't got it on yourself, Dan. Vot did you do vith your hown?"

"It blew out of the windy last night. Ye can hunt for it after breakfast."

The word breakfast had a pleasing sound to Jimmy, and he let the tie go.

Such a small item as that never worried him.

They went down to the public room and found Gummidge alone behind the bar.

"If ye'll serve breakfast to us, Peter, we'll be on our way."

"You shall have it right away," said the landlord, not looking at him.

"It was a fine bit of a storm we had last night, Peter," went on Macraisy. "Jimmy and me had just turned in whin it began, and sure it rocked us to slape as nice as ye plase."

"You went to bed early, then?" said the landlord.

"Faith we did. Didn't we look as if we naded a good slape?"

"I'm glad to hear it."

"Why?"

"Because a crime was committed in the neighborhood during the storm."

"A crime, is it? What happened, faith?"

"Lawyer Peabody, who dined here last evening with Mark Milton, was assaulted on his way home along the road and robbed of his wallet, watch and cuff-buttons."

"Is that a fact, Peter?" said Macraisy, coolly. "Ye astonish me."

"I'm glad you had no hand in it."

"Me, is it? Sure ye wouldn't suspect me of sich a thing, Peter. The man is not dead, is he?"

"No, fortunately. The blow he received was a glancing one, and so he escaped injury. He could give no information concerning the man who struck him down, so the chap is safe if he is not discovered by accident."

"Which will give him great satisfaction, I dare say. And now about breakfast."

"I will attend to it right away," said the landlord, starting for the back door.

Gummidge had delayed notifying the village constable about the outrage on Lawyer Peabody in order to give Macraisy and his companion a chance to beat it out of the neighborhood.

Even at that he was afraid the pair would be overhauled.

He comforted himself with the reflection that he had relieved his old pal of all incriminating evidence, so that in case he was arrested on suspicion nothing could be proved against him.

In the course of twenty minutes breakfast was provided for the Irishman and his cockney companion, and they were called to it by Bob Reynolds.

They ate in the dining-room, and at the conclusion of the meal adjourned to the public room to take leave of Gummidge.

They found him waiting on two strangers, and stood around till he was disengaged.

"Well, Peter, it's going we are now, and if ye'll stand treat we'll drink to your continued health and prosperity," said Macraisy.

The landlord passed out the bottle and three glasses.

After they had had a couple of drinks, the Irishman said:

"And now a last favor, Peter—will ye oblige me wid a tin-spot to see us on our way, for it's broke entirely we are."

Gummidge dug down into his jeans, fished up a bill, and handed it to Macraisy.

It was a ten-dollar one, and the landlord had found it in the wallet belonging to Lawyer Peabody.

Early that morning he had hidden the watch, the cuff-buttons and the wallet in a paste-board box and buried it under the corner of his barn.

He could not resist the temptation of removing the bill from the wallet, for he reasoned that one bill being like another, identification of that particular note was impossible.

In his hurry he failed to notice that the note had been partially torn and mended with two pieces of thin, red paper pasted in the form of a Maltese cross.

The lawyer had mended it himself, and as people sometimes object to taking bills that have been defaced, he had written his name across one of the slips as an evidence that he stood responsible for the note.

Thus Gummidge unconsciously put his old pal in possession of a most incriminating piece of evidence.

"Shake, old pal. It may be for the last time. Let us part like friends," said Macraisy.

"Good-by. I wish you both luck," said the landlord, willing to shake hands now that he believed he was seeing the last of his unwelcome visitors.

At that moment the head constable of the village, accompanied by a deputy, walked into the public room.

He had received word of the outrage on Lawyer Peabody

through one of the farm hands who had been sent early that morning to the village.

As the lawyer was one of the most important and best respected citizens of Sparbolt, the constable lost no time in proceeding to the road-house to investigate the affair.

The unexpected coming of the two constables rattled Gummidge a bit, for he easily guessed the reason for their appearance.

"Dan," he whispered, "the constables. Skip!"

The Irishman looked startled for a moment, but quickly recovered himself.

"Come, Jimmy, it's time we were after getting a gait on," he said, starting for the door.

The head constable regarded the pair with some suspicion.

"I shall have to trouble you to remain," he said, brusquely.

"Remain, is it? And what for, faith? Me companion and meself are in a hurry to proceed on our way."

"You'll have to defer your departure for a short time."

"And who are ye who presumes to interfere with the freedom of an American gentleman like meself?"

"I'm the head constable of this district," and the officer threw back his coat and displayed his silver-plated star.

"The head constable, are ye? And what has that got to do wid us?"

"Nothing, perhaps, but as a crime was committed in this neighborhood last night, it is my duty to examine all strangers."

At that point Gummidge chipped in.

"I guess these people are all right, Mr. Smith," he said to the head constable. "They applied here last evening about dark for supper and a bed, with breakfast this morning. They were both greatly fatigued, and went to bed directly after their supper. When the storm came on I went up to their rooms to see if their window, which faced in the direction the storm was coming, was closed. It was, and they were both asleep in bed."

"At what hour was the crime committed?" asked the constable.

"About nine o'clock, soon after Mr. Peabody and Mark Milton left this place. The storm was coming up fast then. The lawyer and his young friend calculated that they had just about time to reach their destinations before it would burst upon the landscape."

"And these people were asleep in bed at that time?"

"They were," nodded Gummidge.

"What's your name?" the officer asked Macraisy.

"Terrence O'Connor."

"What business brings you in this neighborhood?"

"Sure it's traveling on foot I am for me health."

"Indeed!" said the constable, suspiciously.

"Me occupation having confined me too closely to me office for years, the doctor ordered me to travel from Boston to Rockport and back ag'in, by aisy stages, on foot."

"You live in Boston, then?"

"Faith I do."

"And your business is——"

"Money linding."

"Where is your office in the city?"

"No. 16 Chinbone Lane, up two flights, off Summer strate," replied the Irishman, glibly, giving a fictitious address.

The constable made a note of all his answers in his memorandum book.

"And this young man who is with you—who is he?"

"Me clark and office b'y. I took him wid me for company."

"His name is——"

"Jimmy Brown."

"He is an American, eh?"

"No, he's an Englishman."

At that moment, by an odd coincident, Lawyer Peabody entered through the rear door, and Mark Milton walked in at the front door.

Both stopped and surveyed the scene before them.

"So you're from England, young man," said the constable, looking hard at the sneak thief. "What part, may I ask?"

"Hi'm from Lunnon. I vos raised by me grandmother, a werry religious old voman, who took me to meetin' hev'ry Sunday, and told me never to prig vot didn't belong to me, so 'elp me bob," said Jimmy, quite glibly, in spite of a warning glare from Macraisy.

"I see," replied Constable Smith, coolly. "You're a cockney."

"Vell and vot of it? I couldn't 'elp bein' born vithin 'earin' of the Bow Bells, could I?" said the young thief, flippantly.

"That will do," said the officer, taking a printed bill from his pocket. "You people may have nothing to do with the

highway outrage last night, but nevertheless I arrest you both in the name of the law."

"What's that?" roared Macraisy. "Arrist us! What is the maning of this?"

"The meaning is that I regard it as my duty to take you both into custody on suspicious of being the parties called for in this bill which was forwarded to me yesterday by the Boston police. You, as one Dan Macraisy, an Irishman and professional crook, who escaped from the Massachusetts State prison a week ago, and has been seen in company with a young cockney sneak thief known to the authorities as Jimmy Twitcher, wanted for various small thefts in the Charlestown district. You both tally pretty well with the descriptions printed in this bill."

Smith made a sign to his deputy, who pulled out a pair of handcuffs and slipped one of them on the Irishman's wrist.

The touch of the steel darbies galvanized Macraisy into wild fury.

He tore the other end of the fetters out of the deputy's hand, swung it in the air, and struck the man down as flat as a pancake.

"By the piper that played before Moses, I'll not be taken alive!" he roared.

He sprang at Constable Smith like a tiger and flung him aside.

Then he dashed for the door.

Before he could make his escape, Mark Milton, alive to the situation, grabbed him around the body and tripped him up.

They fell to the floor in a desperate struggle amid a scene of great confusion.

CHAPTER VI.

MARK STARTS FOR POKER FLAT.

Jimmy Twitcher, on the principle that self-preservation is the first law of nature, took advantage of his chance and sneaked out of the door.

The last seen of him was a streak of flying legs cutting across the field opposite, with the woods as his objective point.

Constable Smith recovered himself speedily and rushed to the aid of Mark.

Macraisy, however, was as strong as a bull, and a desperate rascal when aroused.

He fought like a lion, and the constable and the plucky boy could hardly hold him down.

In the struggle one of the Irishman's pockets were torn out, and the marked bill fell on the floor with the Maltese cross uppermost.

"Come here, Gummidge, and lend a hand," cried the officer. The landlord hesitated.

He had no wish to assist in the capture of his old pal.

But he had to make a showing to avoid suspicion.

He managed, however, to trip against the constable in such a way as to spoil his hold on the crook, and fall over Mark.

Macraisy saw his chance and, tearing loose, dashed out into the road, where the sunlight flashed upon the swinging handcuff attached to his wrist.

In another moment he vaulted the fence and was scurrying toward the wood at a speed that would have put Tam o'Shanter to the blush.

Before pursuit could be organized he was out of sight.

Constable Smith denounced Gummidge for the bungling way he had acted, and the landlord swore that the swinging legs of the struggling Irishman had upset him at the critical moment.

As there seemed some truth in his assertion, and there was no reason to doubt his earnestness, the officer let it go at that.

Pursuit for the present seemed out of the question, so the deputy was revived, and Bob Reynolds was called upon to mount a horse and ride about the neighborhood farms to spread the news of the presence of the two escaped criminals in the vicinity.

Mark picked up the mended bill and looked at it.

"I thought I saw a note mended like this in your hands last evening, Mr. Peabody," he said to the lawyer.

"You did," nodded the lawyer, looking it over. "I had it in the wallet that was taken from me with my watch and cuff-buttons by the scoundrel who struck me down."

"It fell out of that rascal's pocket in the scrap," said Mark. "He must be the villain who assaulted you."

That fact impressed itself on the constable.

"You can swear that bill was in the stolen wallet?" he said to Mr. Peabody.

"I am positive," replied the lawyer. "There is my name written across that red slip."

Gummidge nearly had a fit on the identification of the note.

He blamed himself for taking it from the wallet.

If Macraisy was arrested, the Irishman would probably assert, in his own defense, that he had received it from him, and the boy Jimmy was a witness to the fact.

That would place him, Gummidge, in a mighty embarrassing predicament.

The constable turned to him.

"How is this, Gummidge, you told me that of your own personal knowledge you saw those two rascals asleep in bed in their room a short time before the crime was committed on Mr. Peabody."

"I'll swear it's the truth," said Gummidge, in a cold sweat.

"One of the figures you saw, at least, must have been a dummy—I mean the Irishman. That is, unless he was playing possum, and slipped out of the window directly after you left the room. At any rate, it is clear that you harbored two rascals last night, and that doesn't speak well for the reputation of your house."

Gummidge made no reply, but he didn't look happy.

The upshot of the matter was that after the investigation was concluded the officers took their leave to return to the village and organize a posse to scour the country after Macraisy and his companion.

Lawyer Peabody, after wishing Mark farewell on his journey West, hastened home to get his breakfast, and start for Rockland, where he was due about eleven.

Mark himself bade adieu to Mr. and Mrs. Gummidge, Sally and Bob, returned to the school, and after dinner was driven to the nearest railroad station to take a train for Boston with his trunk and grip.

The hunt for the crooks failed to pan out, though a strong effort was made to find them.

When it was finally abandoned, Gummidge breathed easier, but many days passed before he acted again like his old self.

Every morning he scanned the Boston paper eagerly and fearfully for a paragraph that he didn't want to see.

Finally things settled down at the road-house, and matters went on as before, until one morning Sally rushed into the public room and told Mr. Gummidge that Bob Reynolds was missing.

An investigation disclosed the fact that Bob, who had been in the dumps since Mark left the neighborhood, had packed his attenuated grip during the night and vanished—whither no one could say.

Sally was inconsolable.

At one fell swoop she had lost the only two friends she really cared for, for in spite of her daily quarrels with Bob, she felt a sneaking liking for him, for she realized that Mark was not on the same plane with herself.

Another boy-of-all work came to fill Bob's place, but Sally hated him because he was new, and had red hair, and didn't seem to know enough to come in when it rained.

She was continually bemoaning her hard fate, and declared that some fine summer night, when the moon was on the ocean, she would go to the cliffs and jump off, and thus wind up her load of grief.

Then one morning an envelope with her name and address was handed to her by Gummidge, who wondered who her correspondent was, since Sally never had received a letter before.

Sally wondered, too, and felt all of a flutter as she looked at the superscription.

"Maybe it's from Bob," she cried, of a sudden.

Like a frightened antelope she dashed for her room, and in the solitude thereof she opened the letter with trembling fingers that left little of the envelope intact.

"This is what she read:

"DEAR SALLY: Here's hoping you forgive me for running away, which I know has given you a shock, but I can't help it. I couldn't stay after Mark left. He has gone out to Poker Flat, which is somewhere in Colorado, and I'm following him, taking my chances on the bumper of a freight. But I'll find him, and then I'm going to work for him in his mine, and maybe I'll come back as rich as Farmer Townsend. Then if you'll have me I'll marry you, and we'll buy a farm and raise chickens, and eggs, and crops, and be as happy as two bugs in a rug. That's all for the present, for I ain't got any more paper, and I've got to post this before the freight goes on. Don't say nothing to the Gummidges. They owe me wages, but let it go. I'll get Mark to write to you when I meet him, and till then I remain, yours as ever,
Bob."

"Ain't he grand!" cried Sally, enthusiastically, kissing the letter a dozen times. "It's the first letter I ever got from anybody, and I mean to keep it as long as I live, and read it every day of my life. I'm happy once more, and instead of jumping

off the cliff I'll sit there in the moonlight and think of Bob and Mark, and count the time till they both come back with a wagonload full of gold."

Sally danced downstairs and into the kitchen like a sunbeam.

Her sudden display of happiness after two weeks of gloom rather astonished her mistress.

"For the land's sake, what's come over you, Sally?" exclaimed Mrs. Gummidge.

"Nothin', mum," said the little girl, demurely.

"Nothing! Nonsense! Something has."

"No, mum. I was just thinkin'."

"Of what?"

"How happy I am."

"What's made you so happy all at once? Why, you've done nothing but mope around the place ever since Bob went away without saying anything about it."

"I got a letter from Bob," said Sally, slowly, blushing up.

"I want to know. Where is he, and why did he leave so suddenly?"

"He's gone out West."

"Out West!" cried the lady of the house, surprised.

"After Mark Milton."

"What did he do that for?"

"To go to work in Mark's gold mine."

"But he had no money. It's a long ways on foot."

"He's ridin' on a freight."

"Riding on a freight? What's that? A freight wagon?"

"No, mum. A freight bumper."

"What's a freight bumper?"

"Don't know, mum."

"Well, wonders will never cease. So he's gone to join Mark Milton? Why didn't Mark take him with him?"

"Don't know, mum."

"Well, well. I must tell my husband. There, now, run and draw a pail of water."

And Sally skipped out with the pail as blithesome as a lark.

CHAPTER VII.

AT POKER FLAT.

Mark Milton got his first view of Poker Flat from the top of a stage-coach.

The vehicle was the only public means of communication between the camp and Silver Plume, a thriving town and the county seat, some twenty miles to the east.

You could also go on horseback, or on muleback, or in a rough wagon.

Mark chose the most aristocratic way—a yellow, dust-sprinkled, lumbering vehicle which had seen its best days, and emitted wheezy sounds as though protesting against continuous motion in its old age.

There was nothing particularly inviting about Poker Flat to the eye of an Easterner unused to the Western wilderness.

The camp was simply a collection of one and two-story wooden buildings, built of unpainted material, and apparently set down at hap-hazard near the entrance to the gorge that was called a pocket.

The one-story houses predominated.

The two-story ones represented a hotel, bearing the sign of the "Miner's Roost," the "Bank," the "Crystal Palace," a gambling house and a music hall, with bar-room adjunct, and one or two others.

The houses were all built on one side of the way, and the space in front was regarded as the street.

All the way up the pocket and along the lower part of the encircling mountain-side were the buildings connected with the different mines.

A certain amount of activity seemed to be going on everywhere except around the center of the pocket.

Two small buildings there wore a deserted look, the open one, a mere covered shed set on several stout beams, showed indications of a hoist.

It was late in the afternoon, and the sunshine shot across the mountain-side, and filtered through the myriad of pines that clothed, so to speak, the harsh rocks.

"Waal, young feller, yonder ar Poker Flat," said the rough driver of the four-horse team to Mark, who sat beside him on the box. "How d'ye like it?"

"Looks kind of rough, and it isn't much of a place," replied the boy.

"You can't expect a hull lot our hyar, but seein' as you hev come to stay, I reckon you'll soon get used to it. See them two small shanties yonder?" he went on, pointing with his long whip.

"Yes."

"That's yer property—ther Milton mine, sich as it ar. I reckon it's a good claim, if it hain't thar best in thar pocket. It's erbout time somebody came to look after it, for it's been jumped once or twice, and may be ag'in. You'll need backbone to keep out'r trouble; but thar hoys 'round hyar will stand by you when you show 'em you are George Milton's son, and will see you get fair play."

"I hope so, for I'm a stranger in a strange place; but I don't ask anything more than a square deal."

"You'll get, it, I reckon. There are men here who knew your father. Them are thar men who put a kibosh on the jumpers when they got on to 'em."

"Who were the rascals who tried to steal the property?"

"Two or three tough fellows from Yuba Dam, some miles to thar west, and thar cronies. They came hyar, showed docyments that apparently gave them thar right to thar property, and went to work. They were allowed to go ahead till Jim Wagner got suspicious and communicated with yer guardeen in thar East. Thar reply he got settled thar business, and the squatters had to mosey. They put up a fight, for they had done quite a bit of work—sunk a twenty-foot shaft and ran two short tunnels out of it—but thar boys wouldn't stand no nonsense, and they were given the choice of helpin' to populate thar graveyard whar yer old man is buried, or dust. They dusted."

"And they haven't been around since?"

"Arter a time one of 'em came back, bought out a claim up the mountain that ain't worth much to speak of, and the others turned up one by one, and have been helpin' him work it. But I reckon it's a blind, and that they're plottin' to get thar hooks in on the Milton Mine ag'in."

"How can they after being fired off it?"

"Waal, thar ar more ways than one of skinnin' a cat. Your comin' will put a spoke in their wheel. You must get to work on your claim at once, and then they'll have no chance to butt in. If they should try to interfere, all yer have to do will be to call on Jim Wagner for protection, and he'll see yer get it. Things hyar ar worked on thar level. If you make yourself pop'lar you'll get thar glad hand, and that's what yer stand in need of."

The coach swung down the road, and for the next ten minutes Poker Flat was out of sight of the vehicle.

Then it burst on Mark's view at close range, and five minutes later the coach reined in in front of the "hotel."

Mark sprang down, and immediately became the target for several loungers who occupied tilted chairs outside the entrance.

Every one saw he was a young "tenderfoot" or visitor from civilization, for his clothing, if nothing else, gave him away, and all were curious to learn why he had come to the Flat.

One old scarred vet suggested he was a new clerk for the bank, another surmised he might be fresh talent for the nightly show at the "Palace," while a third volunteered the opinion that he might be a relative of one of the owners of the "Get Thar" or some other mine in the diggings.

While the driver was unloading the mail-bag and Mark's trunk, the boy caught up his grip and entered the hotel.

Moses Taggart, the proprietor, was behind the bar, figuring up his accounts.

He looked at Mark and saw a fresh guest.

It was all one to him whether the newcomer was a tenderfoot or not, though the former were scarce as hen's teeth at Poker Flat.

The appearance of the driver with a trunk indicated that the visitor was not a transient one, and the hotel man felt a glow of satisfaction.

He had several rooms unoccupied, and was anxious to fill them.

"Howdy, stranger," he said, pushing an account book forward for the boy to sign his name in. "You are welcome as the flowers in May. Had a pleasant ride over from Silver Plume?"

"Yes, sir. I liked the ride first rate," he replied, digging the pen into the pyramid-shaped ink bottle and signing: "Mark Milton, Sparbolt, Maine."

Taggart yanked the book around and ran his eye over the writing.

"Milton!" he ejaculated, in some surprise. "Are you the son of George Milton?"

"Yes, sir."

"You're more'n welcome, son. Come to take charge of your property, eh?"

Mark admitted that was what had brought him to the Flat.

"You want to see Jim Wagner when he comes to supper. He know your father well, and he'll make you acquainted with the

boys and show you around. I'll interduce you to him as soon as he shows up. Your room will be No. 16, at the end of the passage on the floor above. You won't find any style about it, but the bed is comfortable, and that's the most important, for I guess you won't be in it during the daytime. You can leave your money, what you don't need in your pocket, in the safe, and I'll be responsible for it."

Taggart went to a rear door and yelled for "Hank."

That parry, a rough-and-ready, middle-aged man, with his sleeves rolled up, appeared, and the proprietor directed him to take Mark's trunk to No. 16.

"When you've washed up you can help yourself to a chair outside and take a sight of the Flat till the gong rings for supper," said Taggart, as Mark followed Hank down the hallway to the stairs that led to the second floor.

As soon as he was gone one of the loungers outside strolled into the hotel and looked at the "register."

Five minutes afterward the bunch on the low porch knew that the heir of the Milton mine had come to look after his property, and the news they argued was sure to prove something of a sensation to Poker Flat.

The Milton Mine was believed to be rich in gold and silver ore, and to have it worked would prove of general advantage to the camp.

Indeed, it was at Jim Wagner's repeated suggestion that Lawyer Peabody was induced to send the young heir out to the Flat.

The loungers were discussing the newcomer when Mark walked outside and sat down in one of the chairs at a little distance from them.

Men who had nothing better to occupy themselves with than to hang around a hotel door, smoke and swap stories, did not appeal to him.

He was a lad of energy and ambition, and had no use for lazy people.

He had not expected to find idle men loafing around a hustling mining camp.

It didn't seem to be a place for such individuals.

He soon learned that Poker Flat was afflicted with the barnacles of society just as larger places were, and he wondered how they paid their way, for, like everybody else, they had to eat and sleep, and there was no free list at the camp.

He later discovered that they picked up odd jobs about the "street" mornings and nights, and lounged during the afternoon.

Mark sat and watched the shadows gather up through the pocket as the sun slowly sank behind the lower line of the western peaks behind the camp.

He could see pigmy figures working about the different mines hoisting out the ore and shoveling it into bags which they added to ramparts of filled ones, to be shipped later by wagons to the smelting plants at Silver Plume.

There was already a project under consideration by the Poker Flat owners to erect a co-operative smelter on the ground and thus do away with the long haul.

The chances were that it would be put into effect.

Far up on the southern slope of the range Mark saw the plant of the bunch which had jumped his property and been driven off.

These men did not live in the camp, but fed themselves on their own ground, and slept in a building they had provided for that purpose.

Most of them were to be seen in the bar-room of the "Silver Palace" after dark, and though they shipped no ore out of the camp, as far as was known, they were never at a loss for spending money, and consequently were in good standing with the proprietor of the place.

As they frequented the gaming tables the inference was that they won more than they lost.

Work stopped with dusk, about seven at that season, and the supper gong did not boom till thirty minutes later, which allowed the owners and superintendents time enough to wash up and reach the hotel.

As they appeared singly and in pairs, they did not fail to observe the young stranger who had come to camp that afternoon.

Nor were they kept long in ignorance of his identity.

Word passed from mouth to mouth that the heir of the Milton Mine had arrived at the Flat, and he naturally became an object of much curiosity.

A Chinaman came out on the porch with a gong in one hand and a bass drumstick in the other.

The loungers rose like a covey of birds at the shot of a sportsman, before a sound came from the gong, and made a

bee-line for the dining-room in the rear, the door of which had been thrown open.

Before sounding the gong the Celestial approached Mark.

"Mistee Milton," he said, "bossee wantee see you allee samee light away. You findee him sittee by door."

"All right," replied the boy, rising.

As he entered the building the gong reverberated behind him.

Moses Taggart sat at the dining-room door punching the meal tickets of his boarders as they entered the dining-room.

Beside him stood a sunburned, bearded man fully six feet tall, and built in proportion.

He was dressed in a jacket, blue shirt and trousers, the latter secured by a heavy belt around his middle.

This was Jim Wagner, the most important man at the camp, and the owner of the Blue Streak G. & S. mine.

He took Mark in from head to foot in one comprehensive glance, and the inspection was satisfactory to him.

"Milton," said Taggart, handing him a blue meal ticket with one figure punched, "this is Jim Wagner, your father's friend."

"Glad to make your acquaintance, Mr. Wagner," said Mark, grasping the miner's tanned and knotty hand.

"Same here, young man," responded Wagner. "You are welcome to the Flat."

"It is pleasant to meet a man who knew my father," said Mark.

"I reckon. You feel like a cat in a strange garret, I dare say, but I'll take you under my wing, make you acquainted with the boys, and give you the benefit of my advice and experience."

"Thank you, Mr. Wagner," said the boy, gratefully.

"You are welcome. Come on. You'll eat at our table. The meals here are plain, but substantial. We put on no frills in Poker Flat. We dine at noon, so this meal is supper. You had your dinner at Silver Plume, of course."

"Yes," said Mark, following him to a side table, where the mine owners ate by themselves.

Poker Flat, as might be supposed, was thoroughly democratic in its sentiments, but in spite of that fact social lines were drawn in the hotel dining-room.

No one had ever presumed to draw these lines, but they existed just the same.

The guests simply divided themselves according to their feelings, that was all—every one to his taste, as the old woman said who kissed her cow.

The loungers and their ilk flocked together at the far end of the long table in the center of the room, and the rest graded themselves up to the superintendent of the "Blue Streak," who sat at the head nearest the door.

Everybody was satisfied, and so things always went smoothly at meal time.

The waiters were healthy, bright-faced young women, who knew their business and attended to it with the smoothness of an easy-going machine.

They were smart at repartee when jollied by the guests, and if they played any favorites they knew how to work the game to the queen's taste.

Everybody feed his particular waiter once a week—that was understood—but several slyly passed extra donations, and lost nothing by it.

Jim Wagner introduced Mark to three owners, and then the girl who had the honor of serving that table glided up to take their orders, flashing a glance of curiosity and approval at the young stranger from the East.

CHAPTER VIII.

MARK VISITS THE PALACE.

By that time everybody in the room, even to the waitresses and the cook in the kitchen, knew the identity of the stalwart, good looking boy, whose father was the argonaut of Poker Flat, and who was heir to the largest claim in the camp, and one which was suspected to be the best.

Naturally, he was regarded as a person of no little consequence.

All the girls looked his way, and rather envied the one whose place it was to wait on him.

They swapped opinions about him in the kitchen, and as the girls could size up a stranger as well as anybody, they agreed that he possessed the grit and determination indispensable to one in that wild and woolly district.

"He looks awfully new, Sally," said one, "but take it from me, he's got the stuff. Wait till he gets into a soft shirt and shakes his stiff collar and patent leathers and gets a coat of tan on; you won't know him as the same boy."

"He's mighty good-looking," said Sally. "They say he's come here straight from school. I s'pose he's one of those college boys I've heard about."

"Do you think Luke Brandon will do anything to him?" said another girl. "He's been howling for a tenderfoot ever since he and his friends went over to Coyote Bend and shot up the camp."

"Brandon isn't to be trusted, but as Jim Wagner has taken the boy in tow, I guess it wouldn't be safe for Luke to get too gay. Wagner is the boss of this ranch, and everybody knows it. I've seen him draw his gun so quick on a man it made me dizzy. He didn't shoot, for the fellow caved, but if he had there would have been a funeral."

"They say Luke is as quick as greased lightning with his gun."

"Maybe so, but he hasn't shot anybody yet."

"It's a wonder, for he's as bad as they come out here."

"I've heard he's sweet on Ruby Ray, Mitchell's new importation at his concert hall."

"I'm not surprised, for half the men in the camp are sweet on her. She has got the loveliest face I ever saw on a girl of her years—she's only a child. And she's got the voice of an angel. I wonder where Mitchell picked her up?"

"Search me. The Palace is crowded every night now when she comes on."

"Mitchell made a ten-strike in getting her all right. They say he and his wife keep a sharp eye on her. She's not allowed to go around alone. Her fame got over to Silver Plume, which is not surprising, and Casey, who runs the Varieties there, was over the other day to see if he could engage her, but heavens! Mitchell wouldn't hear to such a thing. No man is going to let a gold mine get away from him, not that you could notice it."

So the waitresses talked while getting the food for the guests, and they were pretty well posted about matters and things in the camp.

The meal over, Wagner took Mark up to his room.

"Have a cigar, Milton?" he said, but the boy declined the weed. "Your father was the first man to open up these diggings," he went on. "We used to pal together, that's why I consider it my duty to stand by you. He came over here alone prospecting and struck luck. After he had staked out all the law allowed him to, he returned to Silver Plume to get his papers out. Then it was he put me on, and I came back with him and picked out the claim I am working. Word was passed to sundry other chaps we knew, and they responded in a hurry. Then the news got around and there was a rush from different places to get in on what promised to be a good thing. The pocket filled up until all the good spots had been pre-empted, and what was left over not proving to be worth much, the camp settled down to business with the population it had acquired."

"How came it to be called Poker Flat?" asked Mark.

"Well, the boys ran a poker game nightly down here on the level, and when some one dubbed the camp Poker Flat, the name stuck," answered Wagner. "Your father was getting things in shape to sink a shaft when he was took down with the mountain fever. I proposed carting him over to Silver Plume to see a doctor, but he wouldn't have it. He said a doctor had killed his wife, and he didn't want to put himself in the hands of one. I noted down his symptoms and, sneaking over to Silver Plume, saw a doctor, and put the case up to him. He didn't want to prescribe without seeing his patient, but he finally gave me a paper which I had filled at a drugstore and brought back with me. Your father rallied for a while, and might have pulled through if he had kept away from his claim. He wouldn't, and a relapse set in, which carried him off in two days, and we buried him on the southern slope over, looking his claim. I'll take you there to-morrow."

"Poor father!" said Mark. "He died just when he struck luck."

The conversation then turned on what Mark proposed to do.

The boy said he had come to take possession of his property and work it under the legal authority of Lawyer Peabody, his guardian.

He showed the papers to Wagner.

"Very good," said the mine owner. "You have brought money enough, I suppose, to begin things?"

"I have a special deposit in the First National Bank at Silver Plume for \$900."

"That is hardly enough to more than start the ball rolling. However, that need not worry you. You can go slow, and devote your attention to opening up the mine by degrees. The main thing is for you, the heir and practical owner of the mine, to be on the ground to protect your interests by your

presence. When you run short of funds I will advance you enough to keep you busy."

"Thank you, Mr. Wagner."

"Don't mention it. I have an idea you may be able to get along without having to ask for a loan. If you hit a pay streak right off, you will be in a position to take out ore enough to meet your running expenses and something over. It will depend on luck as much as anything else. At any rate, I will see you through. Now we will go out and see the camp by night, unless you are tired and prefer to turn in."

"I'll go with you."

"There isn't much to see outside of the Silver Palace. That's where all hands go during the evening. It's a combined saloon, gambling joint and music hall. They have a show there from eight till twelve—a variety entertainment, the feature of which at present is a very pretty little girl billed as Ruby Ray. She is an unusual fine singer for her age, which I should judge is fifteen. She has caught on like wild fire, and is making money if she gets all the coin and nuggets thrown at her during her two turns."

"I should like to see her."

"She makes her first appearance at nine, so we have lots of time. The place doesn't begin to fill up till then."

They walked downstairs, where Mark was introduced to several more of the denizens of Poker Flat.

He received many invitations to drink, but as he didn't indulge in alcoholic stimulants, he asked to be excused.

He and Wagner strolled up and down the "street," and finally landed before the brilliantly illuminated Palace.

As there was no gas or electricity in the camp, the illumination consisted of a row of lamps with vari-colored shades over the entrance, and a number of gasoline torches, the flame and smoke from which waved about in the night wind.

Inside, lamps supplied a very bright light, for there were lots of them, and keeping these in order furnished the hotel loungers with a couple of hours' work each morning.

It wanted a quarter of nine when Mark and Wagner entered the big outer room, given over to a long bar.

The place was full of smoke and roughly-dressed men.

To the right was a longer room, the far end equipped with a small stage.

There were fully one hundred chairs, and the floor was laid with narrow, smooth boards, for dancing was indulged in every Saturday night after the show was over.

The hotel waitresses always attended, and to ensure their coming, Mitchell, the proprietor, maintained the strictest order.

Intoxicated men were barred from the floor, and a complaint from any of the girls against a man resulted in the chap being thrown out without ceremony.

These iron-clad rules were posted up on the walls in big print, and Mitchell was always on hand to enforce them with the aid of his assistants.

No charge was made at the Palace for admission.

Admission was as free as the wind.

The profit came from the bar, and the drinks and cigars served around to the audience.

The music was good, and was supplied by a pianist, a violinist and a cornet player.

The "talent" who gave the show was only fair; that is why the coming of a real artist like Ruby Ray created a furore.

The appearance of Mark with a stiff white shirt, vest, striking necktie, derby hat and patent leathers created something of a sensation among those who until then had been ignorant of the arrival of a tenderfoot at the Flat.

A buzz of comment went up in the bar-room, and he probably would have been held up before he got as far as the concert room but for the fact that Jim Wagner was with him.

In spite of Mark's manly air and good looks his city appearance operated against him.

Poker Flat objected to 'dudes, and under that heading the boy was classed.

The orchestra was discoursing a quickstep to which the audience was keeping time, when Mark walked up the center aisle to a front seat.

Wagner was detained for a few moments by a friend, who wanted to see him about some business matter.

Seated by the aisle was Luke Brandon and a crony.

The moment he caught sight of the newcomer he nearly had a fit.

"Holy smoke!" he roared, springing on his feet. "A tenderfoot, by the livin' jingo!"

Mark passed on, but Brandon followed him.

"Up on thar stage and give us a quickstep!" he roared, grab-

bing the boy by the arm. "Up thar, and be quick erbout it, or I'll blow yer full of holes!"

Mark turned and looked straight into the glistening barrel of a cocked six-shooter.

CHAPTER IX.

"WON'T YOU BE MY TEDDY BEAR?"

A buzz of excitement ran through the room, and a score of men rose to see the fun.

It was the first time in his life that Mark's nerve was brought to such a test.

Luke was a typical "bad" man, in looks and actions, but he lacked some of the qualities that usually went with that class of desperadoes.

He had been pining for the chance to browbeat a tenderfoot, and the opportunity seemed to have arrived.

Mark looked at the gun, at the finger on the trigger, and at Brandon's liquor inflamed face, but he did not turn a hair.

He did not believe the fellow had the least intention of shooting him, which was the fact.

"Did you speak to me?" he said, quietly.

"Who do yer s'pose I spoke to, tenderfoot? Up with you on the stage and shake a leg. Up with you!" and Luke pushed the boy forward a foot.

"Take your hand off my shoulder," said Mark.

"What's that?" shouted Brandon.

"Remove your hand at once."

The young stranger's bold stand forced the excitement to fever heat.

"Get up!" cried Luke, shoving the cold muzzle of his weapon against Mark's forehead.

Quick as a wink Mark seized the hand by the wrist, pushed the revolver up and smashed the ruffian on the point of the jaw with all his might.

The weapon exploded with a whip-like report as Luke fell over against a man behind him, and the bullet bored its flight through the curtain.

The rascal was momentarily dazed by the blow, and Mark took advantage of the fact to wrest the revolver from his fingers.

When Brandon sprang up, livid with rage, and with blood in his eyes, he found the situation reversed.

He was looking into the muzzle of his own gun.

He foamed at the mouth, but dared not make a move.

"Turn around and march," said Mark.

"Good for you, young feller!" cried a voice, and similar expressions followed.

Through the mob in the aisle pushed Wagner, with two bouncers at his heels.

"What's the meaning of this?" cried the owner of the "Blue Streak."

"Brandon tried to shoot up the tenderfoot, but it didn't work," said one of the spectators.

Wagner seized the ruffian in a grasp of steel.

"You scoundrel! Do you want to hang?" he cried.

The bouncers came up.

"Throw him out!" said Wagner.

There was a scuffle, but Brandon was dragged down the aisle.

On the way they encountered Mitchell, who had been attracted by the shot.

The proprietor did not ask for an explanation.

He knew Luke, and was satisfied he was at the bottom of the trouble.

"Take him into the yard and tie him up there. Stand guard over him till I see what damage he's done. Did he shoot any one?" asked Mitchell.

"No. He tried to, I guess," replied one of the bouncers.

"Take him away."

Brandon was hustled into the yard and tied up.

He was subsequently removed to the lock-up, a small building where offenders were sometimes left to cool themselves all night.

There he was left till the next morning, when Wagner visited him and ordered him to leave the camp at once, which he did.

But to return to the concert hall.

Mark's plucky action won the admiration of the larger part of the audience, and a dozen men insisted on shaking hands with him.

Then Wagner interposed and told the crowd that the tenderfoot was the son of the man who discovered the first gold in the pocket, and that he was the owner of the Milton Mine, which he had come to put in commission.

"Three cheers for the boy!" cried a miner.

They were given with a will, and then things subsided and the show went on.

The curtain rose and Ruby Ray came on amid a burst of applause.

Mark was greatly impressed by her girlish beauty, and he couldn't take his eyes off of her.

Ruby swept the audience with a smile, and then her brilliant eyes rested on the young stranger, whose city looks naturally attracted her attention.

Then came the introductory notes of her first song from the piano and violin.

It was a brand new song she had got that morning called "Will You Be My Teddy Bear?" and she recognized its possibilities with her audience.

The chorus she could sing directly at different people, and the embarrassment she was likely to bring to those parties did not greatly worry her.

All her plans, however, went to the winds when she encountered Mark's earnest eyes resting on her face.

Something like an electric shock passed through her.

She mechanically commenced her song, and its swing caught on at once, but when she came to the chorus, she extended her arms toward Mark and sang: "Come and play with me—be my teddy bear. I promise not to hurt you—I just want to tease you, hug you tight and squeeze you. Won't you be my teddy? Oh, I love you so! Won't you be my teddy bear?"

Everybody at the front could see that she was signing to the young tenderfoot.

As this was something new, it excited the risibilities of the crowd.

The miners looked at Mark to see what effect it would have on him.

The boy flushed to the hair, but stood the ordeal pretty good.

When she repeated the chorus, the audience joined in, picking up the words quickly, and finally roaring out a volume of sound that shook the hall to its rafters.

This was a custom of the Poker Flatites, and afforded them great enjoyment.

Ruby sang the second verse and directed the chorus again at Mark, instead of at some other person in front, which showed she was making a set at him.

The audience repeated it as before, and the girl bowed herself off, only to reappear right away and sing another song.

She sang three songs, then the curtain fell, and the waiters rushed in for orders.

Half the audience, however, got up and went outside, and during the time several other performers were on the stage there were few additions to the crowd.

As eleven o'clock drew near, when Ruby did her second turn, which was a dance, the hall began filling up again, and when she came out it was crowded once more.

After her final exit the house fell to very slim proportions.

Mark and Wagner left with the majority and returned to the hotel, when the boy went to his room, turned in and was presently in the land of dreams, whither he was accompanied by the pretty singer, who once more sang "Won't You Be My Teddy Bear?" to him.

Next morning Mark visited his property with Jim Wagner and one of the latter's men.

There wasn't much to see—merely a twenty-foot shaft and two short tunnels leading off from it, an open shed with a light hoisting rig, and a closed shed with a few tools, bags, and such things in it.

The hoisting apparatus consisted of a rope attached to a windlass and run over an iron pulley in the roof of the shed, the other end being connected with a large iron bucket.

This arrangement had been put in by the bunch of men who tried to work the property to their own profit, without having any legal right to do so.

They sunk the shaft from ten feet to twenty, and opened up the tunnels.

That was as far as they got when Wagner put a spoke in their wheel.

The owner of the "Blue Streak" took Mark around the boundaries of his claim so the boy would get an idea of the extent of his property, and then introduced him to his own mine, where work was going on in a very industrious way.

Ore and dirt were coming up the shaft, the hoisting being done by a winch.

Wagner said he was going to bring a small steam-engine from Silver Plume shortly to do the hoisting.

A couple of men were sorting out the ore and putting it in bags, a pile of which stood in a nearby shed.

The shaft in the Wagner mine was sunk to the depth of

thirty-five feet, and that man suggested to Mark that the first thing he should do was to continue the shaft on his own ground down twenty feet more, and open up a tunnel to the southeast at that depth.

Wagner had men at work in three tunnels.

They used hand drills on the rock, which the mine owner said would be superseded by steam drills when he put his engine in.

Next morning Mark took the stage for Silver Plume, where he made a number of purchases with the view of beginning work on his mine in a small way.

He also discarded his city attire, and when he returned next day to the Flat he was dressed very much like Jim Wagner.

His purchases were brought over on one of Wagner's wagons, and next day work was begun in the Milton mine by its rightful owner.

CHAPTER X.

FRESH ARRIVALS AT POKER FLAT.

The arrival of Mark Milton at Poker Flat to take possession of his property was speedily known to the bunch of men who were working a doubtful claim up on the southern slope of the range.

The fact created some excitement among them and drew forth many imprecations from their lips.

Whatever plans they had in sight, the coming of the boy put a spoke in them.

The leader of the crowd was a man named Riley.

He had been the head and front of the scheme to jump the Milton mine, and his plans would have gone through but for Jim Wagner.

Naturally, he hated Wagner, and would have tried to get back at him but for Jim's bold personality and influence in the camp.

A meeting was held in the living apartments of the Riley faction.

The purpose of the gathering was to consider what was to be done in view of the arrival of the Milton heir on the ground.

"I don't see what we kin do," said a man named Daley. "The boy is under the protection of Jim Wagner, and if we make any move against him there is sure to be trouble for us."

"I hope you don't think I am fool enough to do anything openly," said Riley. "Whatever we do must be done under cover. There are several ways of killing a cat—we must adopt something that's safe and sure."

"Have you thought of anything yet?" asked one of his companions.

"No. We'll have to go slow. If we make a mistake it will be all up."

"It ought to be easy to put the quietus on a young tenderfoot. He's as green as grass to the conditions that exist out here."

"Easy!" put in another, who had been at the music hall on the night before and noted Mark's conduct when up against Luke Brandon. "Not so easy as you think, my bullies. That boy has grit. You ought to have seen him last night when Brandon shoved his gun in his face and tried to make him get on the stage and dance. He pulled out of as tight a hole with flying colors as ever tenderfoot found himself in. If you chaps think he's a marker, you never made a greater mistake in your lives."

Riley uttered an imprecation.

"I heard about it," he said; "but I guessed the matter was exaggerated."

"Not a bit of it. I was within a few feet of him when he pushed Luke's gun aside and knocked the man silly with a clip on the chin. He knows how to use his mawleys, and he has the power behind them. He's no spring chicken. We have our work cut out for us to down him, with the backing he has in Wagner, make no mistake about it."

"All the more reason why we should work under cover, then," said Riley. "We might get Brandon to help us. He must feel revengeful toward the boy. It would be a clever trick to use him as a cat's paw."

"Brandon has been forced to leave the camp, and warned not to return."

"That was Wagner's work, I s'pose?" gritted Riley.

"Of course. What Wagner says goes here, as you ought to know."

"Yes, I know it, blame him! I'd give \$100 to any one who would put Wagner on his back."

"You have suffered most from him. Why don't you do it yourself?"

Riley muttered savagely, but did not say why he didn't try to carry out his own suggestion.

"Where did Brandon go?" he asked, after a pause.

"He took the stage this morning for Silver Plume."

"I think I'll go there and have a talk with him."

"I don't believe it will do you any good. Luke is not anxious to run the chance of swinging. There's more bluff than sand about him."

"That's the reason the boy got him, eh?"

"It helped some. He never intended shooting Milton, and the boy probably saw that in his eye. Had he shot the lad there would have been a hanging bee in the camp inside of thirty minutes, and he'd have been shot full of holes as he swung."

The outcome of the meeting was unsatisfactory to Riley, and it finally broke up without any plan being arrived at.

A few days later work was begun on the Milton claim with the deepening of the shaft.

Two men were employed to do the digging, while Mark attended to the hoisting.

There was no rock at that point to interfere with the rapid progress of the work.

The walls were shored up with rough boards as the digging proceeded, and ten days after Mark made his appearance in the camp the shaft measured a depth of forty feet.

The work was inspected daily by Wagner, and that practical individual finally told Mark that he had gone low enough for the present, and he indicated the spot where the tunnel was to be bored.

Work on it progressed easily for a dozen feet, and then rock was encountered.

This necessitated the employment of a hand drill, and matters went slower.

The rock soon showed signs of ore, and the indications were that a strike would soon be made in that direction.

The trend of the ore signs was upward, corresponding with the surface indications on which Mark's father had based his conclusions that the pocket was rich in the precious metals.

The Riley crowd had proceeded differently, Riley having been misled by signs that amounted to nothing and were leading him away from the ore ledge.

That's why the rascal, in his impatience, started the second tunnel in a different direction which, had he been allowed to proceed, would ultimately have brought him some results.

Mark had now been nearly three weeks in Poker Flat, and it was noticed that he visited the Silver Palace concert hall two or three times a week.

The magnet that attracted him was little Ruby Ray.

He occupied the same seat when he could get it, and the girl knew when he was there before she came on.

This information she got through a peep-hole in the curtain.

She invariably flashed him a smile on making her entrance, and frequently kissed her finger tips at him on doing so.

All this could not fail of observation by the audience, and it soon became an open secret in the camp that the young people were sweet on each other, although so far they had not come together.

As Mark had become a popular young personage in the community, and Ruby Ray was the idol of the Flat, the miners began to speculate on the outcome of what they called the silent courtship between the pair, and they became deeply interested in the affair.

Such was the state of affairs when the yellow stage-coach arrived in front of the hotel one Saturday afternoon, and dumped off a couple of fresh arrivals.

One was a tall and well-built man with a Hibernian cast of countenance.

He sported a heavy dark beard, a cowboy hat, and the rest of his garments were in keeping with the statement he made when he signed the register as "William Mulligan, Denver, Colo.," that he was a prospector and mining expert.

His companion, who appeared to be in no way connected with him, had a smooth and shifty countenance, and found some difficulty in placing his signature on the book.

After he had done so, Mr. Taggart could not decipher it to save his life, and he was accusomed to studying some pretty weird signatures.

"What's your name?" he asked his new guest.

"Vell, hain't I writ it down dere?" was the reply in a pronounced cockney accent. "Vere's yer hedication?"

"Never mind that. I can't read your writing. Hand it to me plain."

"My name's James Twitcher. I'm English."

Taggart marked the number of a room opposite each of the names.

"Fetch a trunk?" he asked.

"Vell, blow me! Vot ud I be doin' vith a trunk?"

"I'll have to charge you transient rates unless you remain a full week."

"A veek hain't nothink. I'll be 'ere till I leave. 'Ow long that'll be'll depends on vot 'appens. It might be a year for hall I know."

The visitor's statement was rather indefinite, but the conclusion Taggart drew was that he could count on the party staying a week, and as Twitcher had only a grip, he told him he'd have to produce \$10 in advance.

Twitcher brought out a roll, peeled off two fives, and tossed them to the proprietor.

"There yer are," he said. "Now vhen do ve heat?"

"Dinner will not be served for over two hours yet."

"Oh, mother! And me 'arf starved."

"Didn't you dine at Silver Plume?"

"Vot of it? I'm 'ungry ag'in."

"I'll provide you with a bite presently."

"Vith a glass of hale, if yer 'ave it."

William Mulligan, whom the reader will recognize as Dan Macraisy, had in the meanwhile gone outside to look around.

He made inquiries about the various claims that were being worked in the pocket, and incidentally found out just where the Milton mine was situated.

He learned that Mark had been in Poker Flat about three weeks, and had begun operations on his property.

He went up in that direction and saw the boy working his windlass.

He went over to him and said:

"How are ye making out wid your claim?"

Mark looked hard at him.

He saw the man was a stranger there, but his voice had a familiar ring.

"I'm just getting started," answered the boy. "You are a newcomer to the Flat?"

"Faith I am."

"How did you know this was my claim?"

"Sure I was told it was owned by a b'y, and it struck me ye was that party."

"Yes, I am the owner of this claim."

"It's a good one, they say."

"I hope so, but that remains to be proved."

"It came to ye from your father, I belave?"

"It did." He was the man who first found gold in this pocket.

"If he found gold, it must be in the ground. Do ye want any help on the property?"

"Not just now. Are you a miner?"

"I'm a prospector and mining expert. Me name is William Mulligan."

"Glad to know you, Mr. Mulligan. If you are looking for something to do, I would suggest that you go over to the "Blue Streak" mine yonder and see the owner, Jim Wagner. If he can't use you, he can put you in the way of a job."

"It's kind ye are, young man. I will go over there."

The bogus Mulligan then wished Mark good afternoon and took his way toward the "Blue Streak."

"Seems to me I've met that man before," thought the boy; "but where?"

He tried to think as he worked on, but could not place Mulligan.

And yet he was sure he had met him somewhere.

CHAPTER XI.

MACRAISY TRIES TO PUT IT OVER JIMMY.

The sun went down, and shortly afterward dusk came on.

Work was knocked off at the mines, and the men began to gravitate toward the hotel and boarding places on the street.

The majority of the miners hung out at the places where they got grub, and a cot in one big room, for \$7 a week.

Mark waited for Wagner to come along, and they started off together.

Poker Flat was ruled by a law and order committee of six men, headed by Wagner.

They met once a week to discuss the affairs of the camp, but these meetings were generally brief, as there was little to engage their attention.

Each member of the committee had the authority to act as the society of the whole if the occasion demanded action on his part.

They were men well qualified for that duty, and the mere

approach of one was sufficient of itself to stop an incipient row.

Once in a while tough citizens from Yuba Dam, Paradise Fork and sundry other small mountain camps rode into the Flat late Saturday night, or after dark on Sunday, and shot things up; but as long as they did no damage they were not interfered with.

On these occasions the whole committee made their way to the "Palace," where such parties invariably stopped to drink, and were ready to make things interesting in case the invaders got too gay.

Every man of them was a dead shot, and it would have gone hard with any bunch that showed an ugly streak.

Mark and Jim Wagner reached the hotel, went into the wash-room, and were ready for supper when the Mongolian pounded on the gong.

Then the boy saw that there was another stranger in camp.

It took him about half a minute to identify this party as Jimmy Twitcher, and then, like a flash, he knew that Mulligan was the crook Macraisy.

He wondered what had brought them to Poker Flat.

Nothing good, he argued.

He took the first chance to pass the news to Wagner.

"Crooks, are they?" said Wagner. "They will have to dust, then. We don't want such individuals here. You are sure you are making no mistake about them?"

Mark told him about what happened at the road-house on the outskirts of Sparbolt.

"I will have a watch put on them," said Wagner. "The man's name you say is Dan Macraisy?"

"Yes."

"And the other chap?"

"His name is Jimmy Twitcher. He is an English sneak thief. He can be identified by his cockney accent."

After supper Wagner asked Taggart about his new guests.

"One is William Mulligan, a prospector and mining expert. The other is an odd kind of fellow, whose writing is rotten. He told me his name was James Twitcher, but declined to say what business brought him here."

"The two are companions, I believe?"

"Not at all. They merely came over together on the stage."

"They appear to be strangers to each other, then?"

"They are."

Wagner said nothing more, and walked off.

"Blow me! if I hever struck sich a place in me life," Mark heard Twitcher say to one of the loungers outside. "I 'ad an hidea of hopenin' a 'otel, but blame me if I see a chance at all."

Mark guessed Twitcher would rather open a cash-box than anything else if he could do it without getting caught.

Macraisy and Twitcher were both at the Palace that evening.

Wagner, who was observing them, noticed that they did not come together, or show any signs of palship.

The Irishman did not attempt to make himself prominent in any way, but the reverse was the case with Twitcher.

He hobnobbed with a dozen miners, and had a lot to say.

Sunday was the one holiday of the week, and the miners put on their best clothes and went around enjoying themselves.

The gaming tables at the Palace were open at full blast during the afternoon and evening, and, in fact, as late as the miners chose to stay.

This was one of the biggest sources of revenue to Mitchell.

He didn't run the games, but he got a rake-off on all the profits the gamblers made.

He furnished the rooms, while the gamblers supplied the outfits.

Those gentlemen also paid him a good price for their board and lodging.

Mitchell also boarded and lodged his vaudeville talent.

His wife looked after this end of the business, and she knew how to do it.

Mark spent Sunday quietly, as did the mine owners and the better grade of the Flat people.

In the afternoon he usually walked out up the mountains in the direction opposite to the pocket.

This was what he did after dinner on the day after the arrival of Macraisy and Jimmy Twitcher at the camp.

After going a mile or two he sat down with his back to a rock and mopped his forehead with his handkerchief, for it was a warm day.

Presently he heard voices approaching from behind.

He easily recognized the tones as belonging to Dan Macraisy and Jimmy Twitcher, the sneak thief.

"I tell yer, Dan, this here scheme of yours is dangerous," said Jimmy.

"Arrah, what are ye talking about?" replied the big crook, impatiently. "Don't ye s'pose I know what I'm about?"

"If yer do I'm blow'd if I can make hout 'ow you're goin' to work it. Yer told me to pick hup hall the p'ints I could, v'ich I 'ave done, and there hain't no doubt but dat boy is pertected by the 'ead chap of this 'ere place, v'ich 'is name is Jim Wagner, an' if yer laid yer 'ands on the young feller yer'd catch it 'ot."

"Do ye take me for a baby, you meally-mouthed calf? D'yo s'pose I'm afraid of this Wagner? Tare and hounas! Sure I'm a match for any man who walks on two fate!" roared Macraisy, angrily.

"I hain't a-sayin' yer ain't, Dan; but Wagner is honly von of 'arf a dozen coves vot carry guns vithin heasy reach, and you wouldn't stand no show vith them. Better give up the hidea of tryin' to hocus-dat boy and makin' him sign away a share of 'is property. Ven 'e got back his senses he'd swear dat yer vorked de game on 'im, and vot Wagner wouldn't 'ave to say to yer l 'ate to think about. Maybe 'e'd 'ave yer 'anged has an example, v'ich I hunderstand is a pop'lar vay of dealin' hout justice in this part of the country."

"Blame your advice, and ye, too, ye omadhaun! Sure it's a

"ere's gratitood, blow me! If yer vishes to dissolve the partnership I'm villin'. Say the vord and I'll tip me rags a-gallop in the mornin' ven the stage starts. This 'ere place hain't safe for heither of us. At hany rate it don't hoffer nothink in my line. Denver vould soot me better, dash my vig if it vouldn't. A chap vith my pecooliar talents vould stand a show of pickin' hup somethin' vorth v'ile."

"Sure it's an ungrateful scoundrel ye are to talk about leav- ing me in the lurch," said Macraisy. "Ain't I paying your board and tratin' ye to a swell time as a gintleman of leisure? After all me lessons have ye picked one pocket since ye landed here yisterday afternoon?"

"If I 'ave I hain't said nothink about it. If yer diskivered 'ore makin' free vith other cove's valuables it vould go vorser vith yer dan if a bobby got 'is 'ands on yer."

"So ye want to lave me, ye villain!" went on Macraisy, de- liberately. "And the nixt thing ye'd do vould be to betray me."

"No, no, Dan, so 'elp me bob!" protested Jimmy.

"Ye think I don't know ye, me darling. Haven't I heard ye talk in your slape? Don't I know what's passing in that bullet head of yours ivery minute of the day? I'll tell you what it is—you know of me breaking into the sheriff's house at Silver Plume, and putting a ball into the head of his nephew who tried to stop me. Ye didn't have the sand to join me in that affair, though maybe ye'd find the courage to peach on me if I gave ye the chance."

"Vy, Dan, blow me tight hif I'd hever go back on a pal for nothink."

"I don't intend to give ye a chance, ye villain! I intend to protect mesilf, do ye mind that?"

"Vot do yer mean, Dan?" asked Jimmy, uneasily.

"The sheriff and his posse may be this way before morning."

"Vell, vot of it? You ain't suspected, are yer? No vun knows who done the business."

"Ye know it, don't you?"

"I vouldn't say nothink. If I vos hasked I'd be as dumb as a mop-stick."

"Do ye know what I brought ye out here for—two miles from camp?"

"To talk about yer scheme to rob Mark Milton."

"Not at all, me darling."

"But you've been a-doin' it, 'aven't yer?"

"That was only to throw sand in your eyes, faith."

"I don't understand yer, Dan. You talk hawfully queer—not like you've been hin the 'abit of doin'. Vot's come hover yer?"

"Ha, ha, ha! Is it afcared of me ye are gettin' all of a sud- den?"

"Don't laugh dat way, Dan. It don't sound natural. If yer vants me to take a 'and in yer scheme I'll do it even at the risk of me neck."

"Of course ye will—now."

"I'm halvays at yer service, Dan."

"Do ye see that flat rock at your elbow?"

"Vell, I hain't blind. Of course I sees it."

"Do ye see this bit of paper?"

"Yes, Dan."

"Lay it down there. Now take this fountain-pin in your fingers and write what I tell ye."

"Go on, Dan."

"This is the sivinteenth of July, nineteen hundred and two. Put that down."

"It's down, Dan."

"It's a fine scholar ye are, faith. Now see that ye write what I've got to say plain enough for a gintleman to read, or I'll put a ball through that skull of yours that'll let a bit of daylight into it."

"Don't, Dan. P'int dat gun away from me, or I'll 'ave a fit."

"Write, now—I confess I entered the house of Sheriff Craig on the night of July 15th with the intintion of claning the place out."

"You hain't goin' to confess yer done dat, are yer, Dan?"

"Niver mind what I'm going to do. Perhaps it's replinting of me crime I am, and I wish to turn over a new leaf. Have ye got that down, ye villain?"

"Yes, Dan."

"Being discovered in the act, I further confess that I shot the young man through the head and then made me escape from the house."

Jimmy, after some difficulty, wrote that down, too.

"Vell, Dan?" he said. "Vot's the hobject of this 'ere paper?"

"Niver mind. Go on wid your writing. Put down—this is only one of me many crimes, for which I'm wanted by the police in the East, since I came to this country, and being overtaken wid remorse, and faling that open repintence is good for me soul. I put all this, which I swear is true, down on paper in me own handwriting—"

"I say, Dan, it's me dat's writin' dis," said Jimmy, stopping.

"Go on!" thundered Macraisy, clapping the revolver against his companion's head. "Do as I bid ye, or by the hoof of Balaam's—"

"Oh, mother!" gasped Jimmy. "I feels an 'alter as neatly 'round me neck as hif it was made to fit."

"Have ye got ivery word down?"

"Yes. Vot am I to do next?"

"Sign that paper!"

"Vot! Me sign it! Oh, Dan, yer wouldn't—"

"Sign it, I tell ye."

"I've lost the pen."

"You've dropped it beside the rock. Pick it up and sign instantly or ye are a dead thafe."

"Vot vill become of me?" blubbered Jimmy.

"Sign!"

"I can't vith dat pistol agin me 'ead."

"There, thin, I'll hold it away from ye; but if ye don't put your fist down so it can be recognized—tare and hounds! what's this?"

The speaker rested his hand holding the revolver on the rock behind which Mark was listening to all that had transpired, and the last sentence was forced from him by the action of Milton.

The boy seized his wrist with one hand and pulled the gun from his hand with the other, then he covered the rascally Irishman with his own weapon.

CHAPTER XII.

ANOTHER NEW ARRIVAL.

"Oh, mother! It's Mark Milton!" cried Jimmy.

"What do ye mane by snatching me gun out of me hands, young man?" said the big crook in a blustering tone.

"To save you from committing another crime," replied Mark.

"Another crime, is it? What do ye mane?"

"You have just compelled your pal to write down a confession of the last crime you committed—the murder of Sheriff Craig's nephew. At the point of the revolver you were forcing him to sign his name to the paper. I knew from the tone of your voice and the glint in your eye you meant to shoot him the moment he had written his name, for in no other way could you prevent him from repudiating the forced confession, so I felt it my duty to save his life."

"Upon me word, it's a wrong conclusion ye have jumped to," said Macraisy.

"I doubt it. At any rate, I know you. You are masquerading here as William Mulligan, prospector and mining expert."

"Well, ain't that what I am, faith?"

"No, your name is Dan Macraisy, crook and self-confessed murderer."

The Irishman ripped out an imprecation.

If a look could have killed Mark, the boy would have dropped dead.

"Sure it's a liar ye are if there ever was one," roared Macraisy.

"Twitcher," said Mark.

"Vell?" said the sneak thief.

"Hand that pen to your pal."

Jimmy did so.

"Now, Macraisy, oblige me by signing your own confession," said Mark.

"Me sign that paper? What do ye take me for?"

"Sign it, or I'll put a ball through your leg so you can't make your escape, and then I'll hand you over to the committee of safety. I shall hold your pal as a witness against you, and when Sheriff Craig gets hold of you I don't think he'll waste much time over you."

"And if I do sign it, do you think me life will be any safer?"

"Perhaps not, but it will be a decent act on your part, for I heard you say that open confession is good for the soul."

"If I sign it, will ye give me a chance for me life?"

"You don't deserve it."

"Sure it isn't yerself, Mark Milton, mine owner and fortune's favorite, who would have the heart to put the rope over a fellow creature's neck."

"What chance do you want?"

"The chance to fly to the mountains and save me life if I can."

"You ask that of me after coming to the camp to rob me if you could?"

"Since the deed has missed fire ye can afford to be ginerous. If ye turn me over to the sheriff me blood will be on your head."

"Are you not guilty of the assault on my guardian, Lawyer Peabody, whom you struck down and robbed that night in the thunder storm on the outskirts of Sparbolt?"

"I admit I am, but it was a mistake, sure."

"A mistake!"

"Yes. It was ye I was after."

"Me!"

"I confess it. I listened that evening to all that passed bechune ye and your guardian in the dining-room of the inn, and I made up me mind to rob ye of the \$100 he gave ye, the draft for \$900, and the copy of the deed of your mine. In the darkness I followed the l'yer instead of ye, and so ye escaped."

"You admit all that to me?"

"I might as well, hoping ye will give me the benefit of me frankness."

"You are certainly a scoundrel, Macraisy."

"A man is as circumstances makes him. Since I've made me bed I must lie in it."

"I shall be lax in my duty if I give you a chance to get away, and yet I am disposed to do it, believing that the law will get you before long."

"Let me go and I'll take me chance wid the law."

"Very well. Put your name to that paper."

"I have your word I can go, thin?"

"You have."

Macraisy signed the paper with a flourish.

"Twitcher," said Mark, "put your name to the paper as a witness."

"Oh, mother! I'll be hanged for the murder, too."

"You were not a party to it, were you?"

"I should 'ope not. Blow me if me talents hever got as 'igh as dat. I'm honly a hamachure at the business."

"Then you're safe so far as that crime is concerned. Sign the paper, and put the word 'witness' over your name."

"Ow do yer spell the vord. 'As it got vun hess or two?"

"Two. Now hand me the paper."

"I can go now, I hope?" said Macraisy.

"You can," nodded Mark.

"And me revolver?"

"Remains with me."

"Are ye coming wid me?" said the crook to Jimmy.

"And give yer a chance to blow me bloomin' 'ead haff? Not if I know it. No von can prove dat I ain't a 'ighly respectable young gent wot is travelin' for me 'ealth. Me grandmudder alwus said dat he who priggged vot isn't his'n, he is sure to go to prison, v'ich 'ighly moral hobbservation I've halways followed, blow me if I 'aven't."

"Then bad luck follow ye for the snivelin' cur ye are!" roared Dan.

He turned about and made for a nearby gorge at a rapid rate.

"Follow me, Twitcher, and don't try to get away," said Mark.

"Oh, I say, yer hain't goin' to have me put in jail, are yer?" protested Jimmy.

"You are the witness to this paper, and as you are a slippery customer, you will have to be kept track of until you are no longer wanted."

Twitcher insisted that he had no intention of running away, but Mark did not intend taking any chances with him.

He landed the sneak thief in Wagner's hands with a full explanation of what had happened, and Jimmy was locked up to await the coming of the sheriff.

Sheriff Craig turned up that evening with a posse, in search for the murderer of his nephew.

As he had no line on the scoundrel who committed the crime, he felt that his work was cut out for him.

He was agreeably surprised by the intelligence which awaited him at Poker Flat.

After interviewing Wagner and Mark Milton, who handed him Macraisy's confession, which he was obliged to admit the man had signed under compulsion, he had Jimmy Twitcher brought before him.

He put the young thief through a sort of Third Degree, and elicited enough from him to show that the Irishman was guilty of the crime.

Finding out the direction the big crook had taken, he started at once in pursuit, leaving Twitcher in confinement until his return.

We may as well say here that Macraisy was not caught.

Whether he got clear off, or perished in the wilds for want of food, was never learned.

He never was heard of again.

Jimmy was taken to Silver Plume and locked up as a suspicious character, but at the end of thirty days he was released, and he at once "cut his stick" for Denver, where he was arrested for stealing, and was sent to prison for a year.

A week later the stage deposited a dilapidated looking youth at the hotel in camp.

He had begged a ride of the driver, assuring that personage that Mark Milton would make it good.

As there were no passengers at all that afternoon, the driver agreed to give him a lift over the twenty miles, for he certainly looked as if he needed it.

The reader will doubtless recognize the boy as Bob Reynolds. He had had a rocky time beating his way out West, but he stuck to it like grim death, and his persistency won out.

As he entered the hotel he did not look like a satisfactory guest, and Taggart asked him where he came from, and what he wanted at the Flat.

"I came from Sparbolt, Maine, and I want to see Mark Milton," replied Bob.

"You claim acquaintance with young Milton, then?"

"He knows me well," nodded Bob. "I've come all the way here to work for him."

"You'll find him over at his mine," said Taggart.

"How will I find the mine?"

The hotel-keeper took him to the door.

"Do you see those two small sheds up the pocket, about a mile away?"

"I guess I do."

"They're on the Milton claim. Go there and you will find the owner."

Bob started off with alacrity.

In the course of twenty minutes he reached his destination. A man was sewing up the mouth of a bag of ore, and he was the only person about that Bob could see.

"Is this Mark Milton's mine?" he asked the man.

"It is," was the reply.

"Is Mark around?"

"He's down in the tunnel."

"How can I see him?"

"Wait till he comes up."

"When will he come up?"

"When he's ready to do so."

"Can't I go down?"

"I'll let you down after I pull up the next bucketful of ore."

That was satisfactory to Bob.

Ten minutes later a bell tapped.

The man went to the windlass, turned it, and up came, not a bucketful of ore, but Mark himself.

"Here's a chap who's waiting to see you," said the man.

Mark looked at the ragged Bob, and for the moment did not know him, for Bob was about the last person he expected to see out there in Poker Flat.

"Mark Milton, don't you know me? I'm Bob Reynolds."

"What!" cried the young mine owner, staring at him.

Then he recognized him with not a little surprise.

"Put it there, Bob. I'm awfully glad to see you. What brought you out here?"

"I couldn't stay at the road-house after you left, so I packed my grip and followed you. I want to work for you if you'll let me."

"Why, you look a wreck. How did you come?"

"I rode on the freight when I wasn't thrown off, and walked the rest of the way. I've had a hard time getting here."

"You look it. Well, never mind, I'll take care of you, now that you're here, and you shall have steady work in the mine. I want another hand to turn the windlass, and you'll do as well as any one. How did you leave Mr. and Mrs. Gummidge and Sally?"

"I left the Gummidges in the lurch, and I guess Sally had a fit after I was gone, but I wrote to her and told her not to worry, and said I was coming out here to join you, so I guess it's all right," said Bob.

"Are you hungry, Bob? You look famished to me."

"Oh, my, don't mention it. I'm half starved."

"I'll give you a note to the proprietor of the hotel. He'll give you something to tide you over till supper. Then take a chair out front and wait till I come," said Mark.

Bob took the note and made tracks back to the hotel.

CHAPTER XIII.

CONCLUSION.

A week passed, and then Mark received a letter from Lawyer Peabody saying he was coming out to Poker Flat to see Mark and the mine.

He was delighted, he said, at the encouraging reports he had received from his ward, and the visit would serve as a vacation for him.

Mark was greatly pleased to learn of his guardian's proposed visit.

He was particularly anxious to introduce him to Jim Wagner, who had been so kind to him.

Soon after Bob's arrival Mark made the acquaintance of Ruby Ray, and in view of the young mine owner's standing in camp, Mitchell permitted them to see each other every night at the back of the stage.

Something warmer than mere friendship rapidly ripened between them.

Mark learned that she was an orphan and a distant relation of Mrs. Mitchell.

That lady encouraged the young lovers, for she saw that it would be a fine thing for Ruby if she married the owner of such a promising property as the Milton claim.

During all this time Riley and his bunch up the mountain side had failed to do anything to get the better of Mark.

The fact of the matter was they found it too dangerous, though Riley did not wholly abandon his intentions.

At last an idea struck him.

He went to Silver Plume and had his beard shaved off.

Then he made some other changes in his face, returned to Poker Flat and asked Mark for a job in the mine.

It happened that the boy wanted an experienced man, and Riley was that.

He was put to work.

That afternoon Lawyer Peabody arrived at the camp and received a royal welcome from his ward.

That evening he was introduced to Wagner, and he expressed his gratitude to the owner of the "Blue Streak" mine for the aid he had so generously given Mark.

Next morning Mark took him out to his mine.

Riley was down in the mine at the time, but he had an accomplice at the mouth of the shaft.

Mark and the lawyer got into the tub to go down.

Bob Reynolds was at the windlass, and when he got the word he began unwinding the rope, and the bucket slowly descended.

The accomplice and Riley exchanged signals.

The tub had almost reached the bottom of the shaft when the rope broke, throwing Mark and his companions out.

Riley was standing in the shaft looking on, and uttered an oath as he observed the failure of his plan to do away with the young mine owner.

Mark and the lawyer picked themselves up and brushed off their clothes.

They were shook up a little, but not at all hurt.

The boy and his guardian regarded the breaking of the rope as an accident.

There was one person, other than the two conspirators, who knew better.

This was Bob.

He had seen Riley's accomplice reach out a knife and hack at the rope.

He dared not leave the windlass till the rope suddenly slackened, then he rushed upon the rascal and hit him a heavy blow on the head.

The man staggered, lost his balance and pitched head foremost down the shaft.

His falling body struck Riley on the head and shoulders and bore him to the ground, and there the two lay motionless.

When they were picked up both were found to be dead, their necks broken.

Bob had to go over to the "Blue Streak" mine to borrow a rope, and he told Jim Wagner what had happened.

That man returned with him to the Milton mine and helped get the new rope over the pulley and attach it to the drum of the windlass.

Bob then lowered him down the shaft with his foot in a noose.

He found the two dead men laid out, and he recognized Riley as the head of the crowd which had jumped the mine a few months before.

He told Mark what had happened above, and that the breaking of the rope was not an accident, but a dastardly attempt to kill both him and the lawyer.

Of course, the boy was much surprised, while Lawyer Peabody was greatly disturbed.

"The rascals met their fate unexpectedly," said Wagner; "but no sympathy need be wasted on them, for they only got what they deserved."

The news of the tragedy and Mark and the lawyer's escape soon spread through the camp and created something of a sensation.

The dead scoundrels were soon provided with rough box coffins and buried with little ceremony or loss of time.

Before the end of the week the bunch who had been working unprofitably up on the side of the mountain packed up their things and departed during the night.

No one was interested in their destination, but it afterwards was learned that they had taken up a claim in Yuba Dam, and were working it.

Lawyer Peabody remained a week in the camp, and then started back East.

Mark accompanied him as far as Denver, and spent a couple of days with him in that lively city before returning to Poker Flat.

The further the tunnel was pushed forward in the Milton mine the better the results became.

Mark had been taking ore out in increasing quantity for some time back, and now he had 100 bags ready to ship to the smelter at Silver Plume.

He had been obliged to borrow some funds of Wagner, but that fact did not worry him any, since the prospects of his mine grew brighter day by day.

He had no team to transport his bags of ore.

This difficulty was bridged over by Wagner, who loaned him the two he owned.

Success engenders enemies, and Mark's good fortune aroused jealousy on the part of two or three small claim owners whose property failed to pan out to their liking.

These men did not dare to show their sentiments openly.

They knew the boy was popular, and that he was high in the good graces of Wagner and his associates.

In some way they learned that he was short of money—possibly they surmised the fact from the slow way the Milton mine was being worked—and they argued that by causing him a serious loss they would put him in a bad hole.

It also happened that the Riley adherents had trouble about this time with the ruling powers in Yuba Dam, and they were given twenty-four hours to make themselves scarce or take the consequences.

They left and went over to Paradise Bend.

This diggings were giving out as a pay streak and was becoming depopulated.

Those who remained were the scum of the settlement, and ripe for any piece of rascality that promised to mend their fortunes.

Some one suggested that they could make a good thing of it by capturing an ore wagon or two between Poker Flat and Silver Plume, and carrying the results to a private smelter down at Yellow Fork, the proprietor of which was a man who would ask no unpleasant questions if silence was made an object to him.

This scheme was decided on, and one of the crowd was sent over to Poker Flat to learn when the next consignment of ore was to be sent to Silver Plume.

He found out that Mark Milton was going to ship two wagon loads in a few days, and that two other mine owners were going to add their wagons to the train.

Preparations were at once begun to intercept the convoy, and a wild ravine in the hills about midway between the Flat

and Silver Plume was selected as the point where it was to be surprised.

An ore shipment from Poker Flat had never been held up since the diggings started to pan out, and no one interested in such shipments ever suspected such a thing would happen.

It didn't strike a thinking mine owner that such a thing would pay.

On one Saturday afternoon Mark had his hands load his bags of ore on the two wagons, in readiness to start for Silver Plume on Monday morning.

Similar preparations were made by the other two small mine owners whose wagons were to make up the limited train.

The two conspiring mine owners who felt a grouch against Mark were unaware of what was on the tapis as concerned the contemplated hold-up of the train at the ravine along the road.

They were ready to put a dastardly project into execution of their own account.

One of them had been to Denver, and when he came back he brought a small quantity of dynamite with him, which he had purchased for blasting purposes, at least he so alleged when he bought it, and as the explosive was commonly used for that object, he had no trouble in getting what he wanted.

He could have got all the dynamite he wanted in Silver Plume, but did not deem it advisable to purchase it there.

On Sunday night he and his partner in rascality went to the Milton mine with the intention of planting it where it would do the most good in the tunnel.

The sight of the two loaded ore wagons suggested that if they were involved in the general destruction it would help the good work along.

Under each wagon they placed a package of explosive, to which was attached a slow match.

They intended to touch the matches off after finishing their nefarious work in the tunnel.

One of them went down the shaft, while the other remained on the surface to pull him up.

But Providence was watching over the interest of Mark Milton, as it had when Riley tried to do him up.

In some way the dynamite exploded in the hands of the man on his way down the shaft, and a sheet of flame shot up the shaft, while the ground trembled and the sound reached all the way to the camp, and brought an alarmed crowd on the run up the pocket.

The man at the windlass who was lowering his accomplice was found unconscious, and the shaft of the Milton mine a complete wreck.

The other rascal was, of course, blown to pieces.

The news flew like wild fire and brought Mark and his friends to the scene.

Investigation disclosed the dynamite planted about the loaded wagons.

That showed that an effort had been made to demoralize the Milton mine.

The unconscious man was brought to, subjected to a Third Degree, and confessed the whole plot.

In the end he was compelled to make good the damage, and then he was ordered to sell out his mine and dust.

When Mark and Wagner went down into the ruins of the shaft to make an investigation of the extent of the damage, they found that the dynamite had opened up an unsuspected silver lode of remarkable richness, and this discovery proved to be the best thing that could have happened to the boy.

The ore train was delayed a day by the explosion, and that day sufficed to spoil the scheme of the men who had ambushed themselves in the ravine.

They were seen and driven off by a sheriff's posse, and several of them were caught.

Their project came to light through the weakness of one of the prisoners, and the bunch which escaped were pursued for several days, and finally rounded up in the mountains.

Half of them were killed and wounded in the fight that followed, and that ended the project to hold up ore enroute to Silver Plume.

Two months later the Poker Flat smelter went into operation, and after that no more ore was sent to the county seat.

The discovery of the silver lode on the Milton property started a new era in the boy's affairs, and from that time pronounced success crowned a schoolboy's inheritance, and within six months the biggest producer in Poker Flat was admitted to be Mark Milton's mine.

Next week's issue will contain "THE YOUNG BANKER; OR, THE MYSTERY OF A MONEY-BOX."

SEND POSTAL FOR OUR FREE CATALOGUE.

CURRENT NEWS

J. W. White, of Edwards, Miss., found a diamond the size of an average pea in the craw of a goose which he had bought from George Clinton. It is believed that the stone was lost on the Clinton place thirty years ago, when the house was occupied by a wealthy family. White has not yet obtained expert opinion as to the value of the gem.

The constable of Roaring River township, in Barry County, Mo., has discovered a cave dweller. His name is Elijah Shrum and he is under arrest on a charge of having cut timber from land not his own. Mr. Shrum has lived in a cave in Roaring River township with his two small sons for three years. An old stove supplied heat. Leaves were used for bedding. Father and sons lived on what they could catch in the streams and trap in the woods.

Commodore William Clark Sterling, of Monroe, Mich., has just celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of his duck shooting in the Monroe marshes. He has not missed a season in the half century. When a boy he shot for the markets for several years, killing an average of 1,000 birds each season. He estimates that his yearly average is 400 ducks, and estimating an average of three shots to each duck killed, including misses and shots fired to finish cripples, makes 60,000 charges fired by him during the fifty years. Figuring one and one-quarter ounces of shot to the charge, he has scattered over the Monroe marshes 75,000 ounces, or two tons and 6,687 pounds of shot. Sterling now helps to improve the game laws.

The largest telescope in the world, the contract for which has been awarded by the Canadian government, is being built by a Cleveland firm. It will take more than a year to construct the new instrument, which will probably be mounted in Ottawa. Some idea of the size may be gained from the fact that an automobile could be driven through the tube. The Lick telescope, finished in 1887, the object glass of which is thirty-six inches in diameter, and the Yerkes telescope, finished in 1893, the object glass of which is forty inches in diameter—each in its turn the largest in the world—were both designed and constructed by the Cleveland company. These instruments are refracting telescopes, while the instrument being made for the Canadian government is to be a reflector, and will have a speculum or reflecting mirror seventy-two inches in diameter. The total contract price is approximately \$100,000, and it will take months to finish the mounting and to grind and polish the glass.

The sequel to a romance of an orange wrapper was terminated at the Blossom House when Miss Mollie Moran of Visalia, Cal., and C. Allen Peden of Taylorsville, Ill., were married by the Rev. C. E. Ruhl of the Mount Washington Methodist church, Kansas City. Two years ago Miss Moran wrote her name on an orange wrapper. These

oranges were shipped from her father's ranch to a Chicago fruit dealer. About three months later she received a letter from Mr. Peden, who had found the wrapper. It developed that both Miss Moran and Mr. Peden are cousins of Mrs. W. J. Peden of Mount Washington. Mrs. Peden had never seen either of the young people until Mr. Peden arrived from Illinois and Miss Moran from California. Mrs. W. B. Burgess of Independence also is a cousin of Miss Moran. At the ceremony were Mr. and Mrs. Burgess of Independence, Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Peden and a brother, W. D. Moran, who accompanied his sister from California.

William R. Schenck, a blind boy, who was graduated recently from De Witt Clinton High School with highest honors, matriculated at Columbia College for the regular course leading to the degree of Bachelor of Arts. The State gives \$300 to each blind college student to defray the expense of readers. Schenck is the fourth blind student to enter Columbia in the last six years. He is 18 years old. It is his intention to travel from his home in Bayside, L. I., to Columbia every day. As in the case of the other blind students, Schenck probably will type-write his examination papers in a room apart from the rest of the class. Aside from this, however, he will have no privileges. The course that Schenck is taking requires four years regularly, but many students are able to complete it in three and one-half years, especially those who enter in February. If Schenck is able to do this, he will be graduated with the class of 1917. Schenck plans to take a course in law after he has obtained his degree in liberal arts.

A perfectly preserved cedar log, four feet long and four inches in diameter, a relic of more than 40,000 years ago, has been dug up by "sand hogs"—as these workmen are called—laboring in a foundation caisson eighty-three feet down in the excavation for the Equitable Building, New York City. Scientists say that the log has been in its bed since the glaciers swept over North America. New York seems, from scientific records, to have been close to the lower edge of the ice movement but sufficiently embraced by it to suffer from its destructive power. Discoveries in New York and New Jersey have contributed much to the scientific knowledge of that far-off time, but while there are evidences of many of the conditions prevailing just previous to the ice invasion, including what appear to be relics of human habitation, also, the finding of the log is of great interest owing to the few specimens existing that give a clew to the nature of the forests that clothed this section. The tree was embedded in a cement-like substance known as hardpan, about two feet above bedrock. The log showed no indication of its great age when sections were sawed from it. The bark has a whitish cast, giving it the appearance of having been rolled in flour, but this is doubtless due to the nature of its rocky bed.

CHEEK AND CHANCE

—OR—

TRAVELING ON HIS WITS

By ED. KING

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER XIV. (Continued.)

Before a theater a red uniformed band was playing, and on the bulletin shields he read the announcement:

"NEW YORK BURLESQUE AND VARIETY COMPANY—BRIGHT STARS OF THE THEATRICAL WORLD.

There were pictures of gayly dressed actors and actresses, besides a long list of the artists and their specialties.

A sudden idea came to Andy. His own brief experience on the stage had not been without its meed of success and pleasure. It occurred to him that he might strike a contract with this company, and thus once more get to earning money.

But first he desired to witness a performance. The impulse was upon him, and he went up to the box office and purchased a seat.

The theater was quite well filled for a matinee performance. Andy's seat was in the third row, which brought him quite near the footlights.

Andy felt sure he could sing and dance as well as any of these artists.

The opening was a lively farce comedy, sparkling with wit and bright songs. After this came a long list of specialties, after the fashion of the vaudeville.

Suddenly the orchestra began to play softly a beautiful air. It was very much like the "Blue Bells of Scotland." From the wings there stepped a young girl of sixteen, tastily dressed.

There was little need of paint upon her rosy cheeks. Neither were lines of pencil required to bring out the glorious flashes of her pretty brown eyes.

The moment she appeared Andy experienced the sensation of one in a dream. He stared, and then partly rose from his orchestra chair.

Down to the footlights the young girl advanced with a bright smile. Then she looked down right at Andy. This was enough. Forgetting everything, the people, the place and all, Andy threw up his arms and cried:

"Nellie, Nellie Spencer! It is you!"

CHAPTER XV.

A PLEASANT REUNION.

It is hard to describe the effect of Andy's move upon those who witnessed it. The people stared, the orchestra paused, and the young singer grew pale and looked down at Andy with wide open eyes.

But only for an instant. That glance was a telegram, and abashed, Andy sank back. The young singer recovered, smiled and nodded to the orchestra, which went on as if nothing had happened.

And Nellie Spencer, for she indeed it was, seemed to outdo herself in that song. The people clamored for encore after encore.

While Andy, with crimson face, sat there and listened. It was indeed Nellie Spencer, his friend of the slums. But what was she doing here. Why had she taken to the stage?

A thousand hurrying thoughts dashed through his mind. Andy realized, however, that time can bring many changes. Perhaps her mother, who was Nellie's sole provider, had died and left her alone. In that case she was certainly justified in earning a living.

Andy could hardly wait for the performance to close. Then he repaired to the stage door.

As he approached it a lithe form darted out, and he grasped the hands of Nellie Spencer, who beamed upon him joyfully.

"Andy! Heaven is good! I feared I should never see you again. You knew me! Oh, what a happy chance we should meet here!"

"Happy chance?" cried Andy. "Well, you bet! It seems like a glimpse of heaven to see you again, Nellie. But how is this? I thought you were going to wait for me until I should come back to New York."

Tears stood in the girl's eyes.

"Andy, I meant to. But I was forced to earn my living. My dear mother——"

"Is dead?"

"Yes."

Andy felt like stealing an arm around her waist. But the place was too public. He was resolved to be her protector henceforth.

"It is all right," he said. "Fate has brought it about. You are henceforth under my protection."

"Then you have found that fortune?" inquired Nellie, roguishly.

"Nellie, I have," replied Andy, seriously. "Believe me, I am rich. I am the legal owner of seventy-five thousand dollars."

The young girl actress looked at him. Then she turned white and gave a little gasp. She seemed to slide away from him.

"Heigho!" cried Andy. "You don't act pleased. Surely you are not sorry?"

"Not on your account," stammered Nellie. "But——"

"What?"

"You will never be the same Andy Dunn. Oh, don't protest, I know better. You can never keep that promise. I release you from it. It is too much to ask. I—I—you will find plenty of girls——"

A sob caught in the young girl's throat. Andy grasped her hand and said in low, passionate tones:

"Nellie Spencer, don't be foolish! There can never, never be any other girl for me but you. That settles it! If you will think me worthy of you. Oh, Nellie, I have struck it rich, and I am very happy. I can see a fine home and a joyful life before us! But there is yet much to be done. I have a villain to fight against. Oh, there is much for me to tell you. Come with me."

Together they strolled slowly along the street, and Andy recounted the narrative of his adventures since embarking as a stowaway from New York aboard the *Caroline Jones*.

Nellie listened with deep interest and wonderment.

To her it was all like a fairy tale, and Andy was her Launcelot. The future seemed one aureole of bright prospects.

"Now, you can see how I am fixed," said Andy, in conclusion. "The fortune is safe where it is. But I cannot dig it up until spring. Meanwhile I shall stand in fear of the persecutions of this Darius Smith. He may try to kill me."

Nellie gave a shiver.

"However, until then I must continue to trust to my wits for a living. It ought not to be difficult, and do you know what my idea is?"

"What?"

"I am going to apply to the manager of your company for a position. I can sing and dance——"

"Good!" cried Nellie, joyfully. "You and I can do an act together. Our hurdy-gurdy act, you remember it?"

"Sure!"

"Come to the hotel now, and we will see Mr. Potts, the manager."

"Done!"

They were not far from the hotel where the New York variety troupe were staying. Nellie speedily found Mr. Potts, and introduced Andy.

"Yes!" replied the good-natured manager. "We are always looking for smart people. If you can do the right specialty, I will take you."

"I will show you," said Andy.

"All right. Come around to-night at six before the theater opens."

Promptly at that hour Nellie and Andy were on hand. Part of the orchestra were present, and the two aspiring young artists gave their act.

"Capital!" cried the manager in delight. "I will bill you for the next town. Come into the hotel office after the show and sign a contract."

So it was done. Nellie and Andy were thus united by a strange working of fate. They were very happy.

From one Maine town to another they went. The New York troupe always played to full houses.

Everywhere Nellie and Andy made a hit. They were named on the bills as brother and sister. Thus everything went smoothly for awhile.

Then the first of a series of thrilling incidents occurred.

One night, in the city of Augusta, the company played to a large house. Andy, while on the stage, seldom looked individually at his audience.

But this night a grimacing, malevolent face in an orchestra chair attracted his attention. He looked a second time and experienced a thrill.

There was no mistake. It was the murderer and impostor, Darius Smith. He was once more on Andy's track, and our young hero felt that the near future no longer held any sort of security for him.

CHAPTER XVI.

A MEETING OF OLD FRIENDS.

Nellie was in the wings as Andy came off, but he said nothing to her just then. Later, however, when it was time to leave the theater, he told her.

The result was that the young girl became nervous, and exclaimed:

"Oh, Andy, don't take any chances. Call a policeman to escort us. He really means to kill you."

"Pshaw!" laughed Andy. "He will never dare attack me in the open."

They were now emerging from the theater entrance. Just as they reached the sidewalk, Nellie gave a little scream and clung closer to Andy's arm.

There, standing on the curbstone, was Darius Smith. There was a sinister expression upon his face, and one hand was concealed under his coat.

It was certain that he was watching for Andy to appear, for just as soon as he caught sight of him, he started forward. Andy saw that he must meet his foe, and pushed Nellie behind him.

Smith came straight toward Andy and said curtly:

"I have found you. Now give me my rightful heritage."

"I have nothing that belongs to you," replied Andy, looking about for an officer.

"Yes, you have. You cajoled the old doctor into giving it to you, but it belongs to me, I tell you. It is mine legally and rightly. Give me his will."

"I decline to do that," replied Andy. "It was his dying wish that I should execute the conditions of that will. He told me that you were an impostor. Begone, or I'll call for the police."

The flushed face of the villain grew purple.

"Give it to me," he reiterated.

"One moment," said Andy, coolly. "Did you ever meet Mr. Sam Fraser?"

"You may thank me for forbearance that night!" hissed Smith. "I ought to have killed you. Will you give me the will?"

"No!" replied Andy.

He was satisfied now beyond peradventure that Sam Fraser was only Darius Smith in disguise. He had, however, been parleying with the wretch chiefly to gain time.

(To be continued)

FACTS WORTH READING

FOOT RECORDING MACHINE.

There are possibilities in the foot recording machine invented by Professor H. S. Hele-Shaw, of London. The professor, in pointing out the extraordinary complexity of animal mechanism compared with mechanical devices, showed the necessity for some self-recording machine. The machine is a small box, the lid of which when opened depresses a spring inside, and just as the pencil in the barograph records atmospheric pressure by tracing an outline on a sheet of paper, so does a pencil inside the box trace on a card with great delicacy the pressure of the feet and the movement of the whole body.

The professor says that the machine, which he devised purely as a hobby, will minutely record the variation between one man's walk and another's. "In every exercise where a person has his feet on the ground every movement is traced. In golf the swings are registered with perfect accuracy. A man swinging clubs could have his movements recorded indefinitely provided a scroll of paper was under the recording pencil instead of a card."

THE BRITANIC LAUNCHED.

The White Star Line's newest 50,000-ton triple-screw steamer *Britanic*, 900 feet long and the largest vessel ever built in a British shipyard, was launched at the yards of Harland & Wolff, Belfast.

The new liner marks a decided advance in marine construction and represents the best ideas of ship-planning that modern builders have garnered from a rich experience during the past decade. Safety is the foremost consideration.

An important feature will be the arrangements for handling the lifeboats. The vessel is fitted with the latest and most approved type of electrically driven boat-lowering gear, by means of which a very large number of boats can, one after the other, be put over the side of the vessel and lowered to the water-line in much less time than was possible under the old system of davits.

One of the advantages of the new system is that the passengers take their places in the boats expeditiously and with perfect safety before the boats are lifted from the deck of the vessel, and the gear is so constructed that the fully laden boats are lowered at a considerable distance from the side of the ship, thus minimizing risk in bad weather.

Moreover, all the boats on board can be lowered on either side of the inboard as to give a wide passage vessel, whichever happens to be clear, and the gear has been kept so far at either side of the ship for promenading and for marshalling the passengers in case of emergency.

Not only does the heavily rivetted double bottom extend the entire length of the steamer, but the massive beams and close framing of the outer hull are supplemented by a heavy steel plating forming an upper hull, such as was placed upon the *Olympic*.

The watertight bulkheads, with their electrically con-

trolled doors, are carried all the way up to the bridge deck, nearly sixty feet above the waterline, and the utmost care has been exercised to make them especially strong, so that with these and several other precautions against serious damage, the builders have confidence that the *Britanic* will be able to float even though six of her compartments should be flooded.

RECENT HAPPENINGS.

William Demond, Lake Oseawanna, slipped on ice and broke his arm, burglars stole his personal effects, and his horse dropped dead. "Otherwise, a quiet day," he said.

Thirty minutes after Mrs. Hannah F. Flynn, Summit, N. J., paid \$100 for a horse, it impaled itself on a tree and had to be shot.

Charles Deuterman, Yonkers ice dealer, had himself arrested and then sued out a writ of habeas corpus to test the law compelling him to give his employes one day off each week.

Nelson Nelson, coachman of Judge Roy, of Summit, N. J., had all his clothes stolen while he slept and was obliged to wear a blanket.

Monte Kearney, Yonkers policeman, put on fixed post in deep snow, became disgusted and resigned.

Burglars who robbed schoolhouse in Peekskill drew maps and practised writing on the blackboard.

Three hundred days in jail and fine of \$150 each imposed on couple of "short change" swindlers captured working Paterson stores.

Highwayman who held up Michael Carroll in Yonkers beat him so he had to be taken to a hospital. Carroll refused to light a cigar for one of them. It was Carroll's cigar.

Miss Hazel Mackay, picking suffragettes for the fair, insists on pulchritude—they cannot march unless pretty.

An orange offered by Miss Lillian Birch to Ernest G. Borchert, a married man, resulted in a divorce suit in North Bergen.

Runaway horse, Sag Harbor, L. I., jams wagon in tree, and is fastened in the open for week, nearly dead from cold.

Charles Brown, Paterson, N. J., runs beer pipe to bedroom, serves customers in house next door on Sunday. Is arrested for passing mugs across.

Man known only as "William" by H. W. Updike, New Brunswick, N. J., who hired him, ran away with \$100, was robbed by tramps, then killed by train.

Hauling his friend, James Bernard, to hospital, John Duffy stepped into saloon and forgot patient in wagon outside. Bernard, nearly frozen, may die.

Fifteen cents was all two holdup men of Bayonne got when they robbed Henry Wingster, driver for baker.

Dr. Rave, Acting Coroner, Hicksville, L. I., hoaxed by boys who call him to view body—that of a horse.

Mayor Adams, of Pleasantville, smelt something burning. His pet cat roasted to death in oven.

THE TWO FLYERS

OR,

THE BOY CHAMPIONS OF THE BICYCLE TRACK

By **ALEXANDER DOUGLAS**

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER IV. (Continued.)

John Jacks was taking all this in.

"That's where he thinks the treasure is," he thought. "Is there anything in it, I wonder. What if there should be?"

"How about the swamp?" asked Old 33, quickly recovering himself. "How about the swamp? We must have shelter. I—I—I am very sorry, but I'm a—a—afraid I shall have to get under cover somewhere until the storm is over, or I shall die."

His teeth were chattering so violently that he could scarcely speak.

John Jacks fully agreed with him. It was absolutely necessary to get the man under cover if they expected to save his life.

"There's a hut down here just back of the point," said Joe. "Old Tyson's, and he's my uncle all right. Mebbe he or Susie would help us. They orter, seeing that they are relations, and that's right, too."

"We will go there and take our chances," said John Jacks, promptly. "You can show us the way, Joe?"

"Of course I can. We are almost at the place where you turn in now."

"Good! Good!" mumbled the old man. "They are gaining on us, John Jacks—don't you hear?"

Yes, John Jacks did hear, and only too plainly.

The long boat belonging to the prison, pulled by two men at least, could be distinctly heard coming down the inlet.

Just then Colonel Gayton's gruff voice could be heard shouting:

"Hey, there! Hey, there you! Stop, or it will be the worse for you when we do catch you, as we surely will."

"He's drunk as usual, and will show no mercy," groaned Old 33. "Oh, boys, aren't we almost there?"

"We turn off right in here!" cried Joe.

They had almost reached the end of the inlet. Beyond in the darkness the roar of the sea could be distinctly heard.

Following Joe's "steer," John Jacks turned the boat in among the cypresses, finding himself in a sheltered position instantly, for here a point of higher land projected out into the inlet which to a certain extent broke the force of the wind.

"Lie low, boy! Lie low!" mumbled Old 33. "Let's see if they pass here. If they don't, the best thing for us to do is to drive the boat head on into the swamp."

CHAPTER V.

THE LONE HUT ON THE BEACH.

"Have they gone by?"

"That's what they have, sir. They are pushing on toward the sea."

"Thank heaven for that! Then our best chance is to push on to the house of Joe's relative. Is it far, boy? Is it far?"

Old 33 was evidently in a bad way. He could no longer sit up straight, but was half lying back in the boat now. His strength seemed to be almost gone.

"It is all right," replied Jack. "We've got a little leeway, anyhow. Now, Joe, speak up and tell us where we have got to go."

"Oh, it's only a little way," said Joe. "My uncle lives on the point, and his house is just back from the beach. What we want to do is to land here and cross over. We can't get to it by the boat this way."

"Do you think you can walk, Mr. Mac?" asked John Jacks?

"I must," replied the old man. "There's no can or can't about it. I simply must!"

And he did.

They landed then, and John Jacks and Joe pulled the boat up among the cypresses, hiding it so carefully that it would take considerable search to find it, and then they tramped in among the cypresses and cypresses until they could hear the sea roaring right in front of them as the waves broke upon the beach.

"We are here," said Joe, at last, pointing to a small log hut which stood back from the beach half hidden among the pines.

"Knock at the door, Joe. All depends upon you now," said John Jacks. "Be quick, too! By gracious, he is going! We can't save him, I'm afraid."

The old man's strength had suddenly forsaken him. He had endured more than most men of his age could have endured, and he had reached the end of his rope.

Reeling back, he would have fallen if John Jacks had not caught him, but the brave boy held him fast, while Joe ran on to the house and knocked loudly on the door.

John Jacks stood still and waited, supporting the old man the best he could.

He heard the knock, too, and then he saw a light flash

out upon the darkness, and could hear voices talking in the night.

"Come on, Johnny!" called Joe, looking around the corner of the house.

Then he ran forward to help, saying as he came:

"My uncle has been dead these three months, but Cousin Susie is here. She'll help us. She's living here all alone, Johnny. She says she can hide us so that we can't never be found, and she'll do it, too. Say, Johnny, is the old man dead?"

"I don't know," replied John Jacks. "It looks very much as though he was. I guess we shall have to carry him, Joe. I don't think he can walk."

At this moment a very pretty girl appeared around the corner of the hut.

She was dressed in the loose calico gown usually worn in that part of the world, and there she stood bareheaded in the rain, holding up a lighted lantern so as to guide the boys to the door, for they were coming on now, carrying the old man between them head and feet.

Susie Tyson was a true child of nature; the daughter of a fisherman and a smuggler. All her life had been spent there in the little hut on the shore.

"Come on, boys! Come on!" she called. "I can fix you off all right. I'll give you some of father's old clothes, and if old Gayton tracks you here, I can hide you so that he will never find you. Come right on!"

A great feeling of thankfulness came over John Jacks. He felt as though he could take Susie Tyson in his arms and hug her then and there.

"The tide is so high and the wind blows so that I didn't dare to go to bed," said Susie, as they entered. "Lay him down there on the lounge. I'll get the whisky and dry clothes, and then I'll go upstairs into the loft and leave you to take care of him. You had better throw some more of that wood on the fire, Joe. Hold on! I'll let the dog out of the shed. He'll give us warning if old Gayton and his man hunters come."

"Thank you! Thank you ever so much, miss!" said John Jacks, with an earnestness that made Susie blush rosy red. "I never expected a welcome like this for us poor jail birds. I shall never forget, and maybe I may be able to repay you some of these days."

"Don't talk about that," replied Susie. "You just get to work and save the old man's life if you can."

This was practical common sense fast enough, and work the boys did with a will.

With the big mastiff prowling about the hut outside, John Jacks felt comparatively safe.

Susie brought three suits of dry clothes, poor things enough, but still dry and not marked with the horrid prison colors which all three had worn so long.

Whisky was forced down the throat of Old 33, and Joe did not disdain a horn of it, too, even though John Jacks would have none of the stuff.

It did its work for the old convict, and he speedily revived.

"I'm a goner, boys!" he muttered. "It's no use! You can't save me. It all came too late!"

"We can try, though," said John Jacks, "and that's what we are going to do."

And the brave boy knew his business, too, and went about it in the very best way.

With Joe's help he stripped off the old man's clothes, rubbed him down with the whisky, rolled him in four warm blankets, and then, moving the old lounge opposite the fire, left him to sleep.

This done, John Jacks and Joe attended to their own wants, and were soon warm and dry, with the parti-colored convict suits shrivelling to ashes in the open fireplace.

This accomplished, Susie came down from the loft and made hot coffee and placed cold meat and bread before them. There seemed to be no lack of anything in that house, and John Jacks understood why when Joe whispered to him that it was a great resort for smugglers, and that Susie was carrying on her father's business, and all went on just the same as when he was alive.

The night wore on, and there was no alarm.

Old 33 slept peacefully, Susie retired to the loft, and it is to be hoped slept, too, while as for Joe, he stretched himself before the fire and was loudly snoring.

But John Jacks kept watch by the old man's side until just as the little clock on the mantelpiece struck four, and Old 33 suddenly roused up with a startled cry.

"Alive! Alive! Still alive!" he exclaimed. "Oh, John Jacks! I thought I was dead! But I'm dying, boy! I'm dying! I must tell you all before I go. First, my name. It is not Mackintosh, as I have led everybody to suppose. It is St. John."

"St. John! Why, that's my name!" cried John Jacks.

CHAPTER VI.

JOHN JACKS MAKES A STARTLING DISCOVERY.

Here was a revelation!

John Jacks stood staring at Old 33 with a thousand strange thoughts rushing through his mind.

He began to wonder now if there was not some reason for the intense interest he had taken in this old man.

It was soon explained.

Old 33 looked at him steadily for a moment, and then said:

"I see it all now. I know now why I loved you! If I was looking into the glass of the past, looking at myself as I was sixty odd years ago, I should see a boy like you. You are the son of my son, John Jacks!"

"John St. John was my father!" said John Jacks, in a trembling voice. "If he was your son, then you must be my grandfather, who was lost at sea many years ago."

"His name?" demanded Old 33, hoarsely. "Tell me his name, boy!"

"George St. John."

"My name! This is fate!" cried Old 33, and then he added:

"Tell me the name of the ship. Quick! Tell me its name!"

(To be continued)

FROM ALL POINTS

Jim Graham, a negro, living in Calypso, N. C., is having a pair of No. 18 shoes made. Jim says that he has crowded his feet into No. 17 shoes, but with the tariff on leather reduced, he can afford to have them comfortably made. He is a giant, being over 7 feet in height.

The Russian Government has authorized the French aviator Janoir, now in charge of the organization of Russian military aviation, to attempt the St. Petersburg-Peking flight in May. He will travel alone on a Russian machine of eighty horse power, and hopes to do the journey in one month.

To shoot two rabbits at one shot is a rare occurrence, but it was done by Warren Peters, of Clausseville, Lehigh County, Pennsylvania. A neighbor told him that in driving along he had seen a big bunny sitting in a field. The two went to the place, and Peters fired. To his surprise he got not only the one he aimed at, but another he did not see, which was sitting in a nest about eight feet away.

An amusing case of pretended espionage is now before the Bernese police court. It is that of a man who has been trying to dispose of plans of certain Russian fortresses and cities such as Odessa and Kronstadt, which he had simply cut out of Russian and Finnish papers. A preposterous point in his allegations is that the British Admiralty negotiated with him and was even prepared to give him hundreds of francs for "documents" which it had not seen.

A species of acacia, which grows very abundantly in Nubia and the Soudan, is called the whistling tree by the natives. Its shoots are frequently, by the agency of the larvæ of insects, distorted in shape and swollen into a ball from one to two inches in diameter. After the insect has emerged from a circular hole in the side of this swelling, the opening, played upon by the wind, becomes a musical instrument, nearly equal in sound to a sweet-toned flute.

The tight-fitting, narrow bottom skirt is some 3,000 years old, according to Professor Max Muller, Egyptologist at the University of Pennsylvania. "All ancient Egyptian paintings and statuettes represent the women wearing hobble skirts," he said. "The narrow, close-fitting dress was in keeping with Egyptian fashion and, of course, the artist portrayed all his feminine subjects with both feet together. Not so with the men. The sculptor was allowed the liberty of showing the men with one foot ahead of the other."

Andrew Bjorkman, of Iron Mountain, the largest individual logger in upper Michigan, expects his season's cut to reach 10,000,000 feet of mixed logs, 15,000 cedar posts, 12,000 cords of pulpwood, 10,000 cedar poles, 3,000 cords

of hard wood, and 2,000 railroad ties. The last white-pine trees in the Torch Lake district of Houghton County are being cut this season by Oliver Dion, of Lake Lindon. The stand comprises 200,000 feet. The biggest tree in the tract, recently felled, stood 110 feet high, and scaled 7,111 board feet.

Since the discovery of Mount McKinley, in Alaska, North America has ranked third among the continents in the matter of height of mountains. Asia has Mount Everest, of the Himalayas, 29,002 feet above sea level, and South America has Mount Aconcagua, of the Andean system, 23,080 feet in height. North America comes next with Mount McKinley, 20,300 feet, and Africa is fourth with Kibo peak 19,320 feet in height. Mont Blanc, Europe's highest mountain, is 15,782 feet, which is higher by more than a thousand feet than any mountain in the United States, exclusive of Alaska.

Captain Louis Lane, of the power schooner Polar Bear, which is frozen in the Arctic Ocean, near Flaxman Island, arrived at Seattle, Wash., recently, from Valdez by steamship, accompanied by Eben Draper, of Boston, Mass.; Dunbar Lockwood, also of Boston, and Will T. Hudson. The men had walked from the arctic shore to Circle City, Fairbanks, and Valdez, a distance of 2,000 miles. George Silsby and John Heard, sportsmen, of Boston, and Samuel Mixter, W. Sprague Brooks, and Joseph Dixon, scientific collectors, remained on the vessel. Captain R. D. Pederson, commander of the schooner Elvira, which was crushed by the arctic ice, and who walked from the Arctic Ocean to Valdez, also arrived from the North.

Thomas Seaton, last year pitcher with the Philadelphia Nationals, signed recently to pitch for the Federal League, it was announced from headquarters. Seaton will be assigned to Brooklyn. He declared that he had not come to any agreement with President Baker of the Philadelphia club. Seaton's salary with the Brooklyn club will be \$7,000 a year, it was announced, and he was paid one year's salary in advance. He was one of the greatest pitchers in the league last season. Seaton's contract calls for his services for three years, and it is understood he received in advance some of the \$25,000 given President Gilmore by R. B. Ward of the Brooklyn Federals, with instructions to sign a player and manager. The manager wanted by Brooklyn is Jake Stahl, and Ward will reach Chicago in a few days to talk personally with the former leader of the Red Sox. Seaton's contract was approved by his wife, who accompanied him from Kansas City. Al Brennan, the other former Philadelphia National pitcher who joined the Chicago Federals, and his wife, also came from Kansas City. Brennan expects to go to Paw Paw, Mich., to visit William Killifer, over whose services the Federals and organized ball threaten a legal battle. Brennan said he believed Killifer would play with the Federals.

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BRIEF BUT POINTED ITEMS

Some of the Paris newspapers quote a Japanese diplomat as saying that Japan knows every detail of the United States Navy from Japanese employed on American war-ships "who are not working as stewards for the ridiculously small wages paid them."

A steel hatpin, eight inches in length, was removed from the valuable bull terrier of James P. Mann, Boulder, Col., by Dr. S. A. Ferguson, and the dog still lives. "Spots" had been suffering severe pains for three months and physicians had diagnosed the case as rheumatism.

At Annecy, in the Haute Savoie, the casting of the huge bell for the Rouen Cathedral has just been finished. The bell is the gift of Pope Pius X. It weighs 45,000 pounds and is the largest in France. It will be called the "Jeanne d'Arc," and will be installed on the anniversary of her death.

For damaging a document by biting it a contractor named Sauze was sentenced the other day at Nimes to eight days' imprisonment and 20 francs (\$4) fine. The document in question was a contract into which he had entered, but coming to the conclusion that it was not in his interest, he asked the other party to produce it. He then seized it and bit off the part on which he had signed his name and swallowed the piece of paper.

The value of the police dogs which have for some time been attached to the Paris police force was strikingly illustrated the other night. Two Montmartre apaches quarrelled and left the motorcab in which they were driving to fight a duel with knives in the street. Suddenly one of the men threw away his knife and fired on his adversary with a revolver. The shot brought two policemen to the spot with a dog, and while one of the apaches drove off in the cab the man with the revolver took to his heels, firing at his pursuers as he ran. Before he had gone far, however, the dog overtook him and brought him to the ground by biting him in the calf. The dog then leaped at his throat, and kept him pinned to the ground till the policemen came up and arrested him.

A successful experiment has just been made of a device involving the principle of perpetual motion. Camille Flammarion and other scientific notabilities were present at the test of the invention, which was exhibited in Paris by a Turin engineer, Virginio Florio. The machine works on the principle of a difference in temperature and the permanent thermic conductivity between air and water. The apparatus has five hollow, liquid-filled systems of tubes projecting from a revolving axis device so arranged that when the ends of the tubes pass through a receptacle of water underneath the heat of the water, compared with that of the air, makes the liquid in the tubes to flow in such a way that the axis revolves continually. The inventor explained the system to the scientists, who appeared considerably impressed with Florio's invention.

JOKES AND JESTS.

"I suppose, Mr. Casey," said the passenger to the Irish pilot, "you know where all the rocks are along this coast." "Faith, Oi do not," replied the pilot, "but Oi know where they ain't."

Tramp—Please, mum, if ye'll kindly help me on me journey I'll be much obleeged. Housekeeper—Huh! On a journey, eh? Tramp—Yes, mum; I'm goin' West to start a bank.

"What do you mean by 'embers of the dying year?" asked the poet's wife. "Why, Nov-ember and Dec-ember, of 'course, my dear," replied the long-haired one with a fiendish grin.

"Ah," he sighed, "I was happier when I was poor." "Well," they answered coldly, "it is always possible for a man to become poor again." But somehow the idea did not seem to impress him favorably.

"The discord was something fierce," said Borem, in speaking of an amateur concert. "Why, the music was so loud I actually could not hear myself talk." "How delightful!" exclaimed Miss Cutting.

"Sir," began the young man nervously, "I wish to ask your consent for my marriage with your daughter." "Eh?" quickly rejoined the parent. "What of your income? Is it sufficient to support a wife?" "It is," boldly returned the slightly nettled aspirant; "and, what is more, it's sufficient to stand an occasional touch from my wife's father!" "Then she's yours, my son!"

Seven-year-old Mary was studying her Sunday school Bible lesson. For several minutes she was still as a mouse, but a pucker between her brows betokened deep thought. Finally she asked: "Mamma, how old are babies before they can talk?" "You began talking when you were two years old, dear." "Don't they begin any younger than that?" "Not very often, dear." "Never when they are very, very young?" "No, dear, why do you ask?" "Because it says here in my Bible, 'Job cursed the day he was born.'"

A SUCCESSFUL RUSE.

By Col. Ralph Fenton.

I was journeying through one of the Southern States, and was the guest of one of Virginia's wealthiest gentlemen, when an event occurred that held my steps for a time, and led me into investigating one of the most terrible tragedies that has ever darkened the annals of the Old Dominion.

I was the guest of Tremont Edford.

He was the scion of an ancient family, belonging, in fact, to one of the oldest of the F. F. V.'s. I never met the gentleman until my present visit, but he had met my father, and meeting by accident on one of Richmond's streets, I was at once pressed to make Edford's beautiful home my own during my stay in the capital city.

Of course I accepted. I was off duty, anyhow, and could do as I liked; and thus it was that I became an actor in the interesting events I am about to relate.

Riverside was a beautiful home, indeed—ancient in its appearance, yet full of modern beauties, that served to drive away the shadows and dust of the ages gone.

Tremont Edford had two children—North, a stalwart young man of twenty, with his father's eyes and complexion; and Aimee, a bright-eyed, golden-haired girl of seventeen. I learned afterward that the girl was Edford's brother's only child, left to his care when that brother died of an old wound that had been inflicted just before the downfall of the Confederacy. The event of this brother's death was some five years before my visit to Riverside.

Although young, apparently enjoying the best of health, surrounded by everything calculated to make one supremely happy, Aimee yet seemed anything but contented with her lot.

"Heavens! Colonel Sharp, come here quickly!"

It was the startled, tremulous voice of Tremont Edford that shot into my ears from the open door of my room. I had been writing, and I glanced at my watch as I rose to my feet. The hour was midnight.

Walking forward, I looked into a white face, so full of startled horror as to impress me strongly. I realized that something of a terrible nature had happened.

I followed the master of Riverside down a long hall without a word. Soon we came to an open door. Pushing his way in, Edford paused near the center of the room.

Something of a terrible nature caught my eye. Tremont Edford was bending over something on the carpet.

The room was but dimly lighted, yet I caught the glimmer of golden hair, and instantly realized what was there. With a quick stride I was at the side of Edford, and bending over the silent form on the carpet—the form of Aimee with a dagger hilt standing above her breast.

The blue eyes were open and glassy, filled with a terror not to be mistaken.

"Tell me, is she dead, colonel?"

"She is dead," I answered, awed at the awful nature of the young girl's taking off. "What do you know of this, Mr. Edford?"

"Nothing. It is an unexpected horror to me," answered the Virginian, in a husky voice.

"Bring a light," I commanded, all my old coolness returning suddenly. I had my wits about me, and was anxious to investigate.

The light was brought, and the investigation I made brought to light what seemed to be a case of suicide. The right hand of the maiden was blood-stained, evidently having been in contact with the wound. In the left hand a bit of paper was found clutched in a death-grip that was difficult to unloose.

I did succeed, however, and soon had the paper outspread under my gaze. I give the contents here:

"It is useless, dear George. I cannot leave my friends, and yet it is hard to give you up. I am unhappy and desperate. There is but one way to end it all. I will take my own life, and then—oblivion. You, dear George, know what my troubles are. You will forgive me; for the others I care not. I have the dagger, and the house is quiet. Farewell—farewell. AIMEE."

The master of Riverside reached out for the paper.

"Permit me to keep it, please."

"Certainly, if you wish," answered Mr. Edford.

There was a sad story connected with the poor dead child, I knew. I questioned the master regarding the person called George in the suicide's note.

"It must be that she referred to George Curtain. He's only a mechanic, and I never saw much of him, and never cared to. I don't think there was any intimacy between the fellow and Aimee. North would have married his cousin had she lived."

This ended the conversation at that time. Edford seemed too deeply shocked to speak further. Other members of the household were roused, and soon there was weeping and wailing throughout Riverside.

An inquest followed as a matter of course. Verdict, "suicide." I was not fully satisfied. I scarcely doubted the righteousness of the verdict, but what had driven a beautiful young creature like Aimee Edford to self-destruction? Something out of the ordinary, certainly.

I still tarried at Riverside after the funeral of the poor girl, and was afterward glad that I did so.

One morning as I was strolling under the trees on the lawn, smoking a cigar and meditating, a stranger paused at the fence, leaned against the pickets, and fixed his gaze intently on my face. I did not relish this, naturally, and at once approached and bade the fellow good-morning.

"You are the gentleman who's been stopping at Riverside lately—Mr. Sharp?"

The man, who was young, and not unintelligent looking, uttered the sentence in low, yet hurried tones.

"I am Mr. Sharp," I said.

"And a detective?"

"Sometimes——"

"I know; Aimee told me. I am George Curtain. I loved her, and but for a villain we would have been wed. Do you know, if the poor child did take her life, Tremont Edford drove her to it."

"This is rough talk. I am a guest here——"

"And will not listen to the truth about your host. I

could tell a mighty strange story. This property was Miss Edford's; it is now her uncle's."

"I would like to hear the story, Mr. Curtain," I said in a mollified tone.

After glancing sharply about, and seeing no one, the young man gave me the story.

"So you see, sir, Aimee was not well used by her relatives, and it was for his interest to get her out of the way, since she positively refused to become the wife of her cousin North. I don't say there was foul play, Mr. Sharp, but I don't believe the old gent is any too good to do a mean thing if he should get the notion into his head. I mean to investigate, anyhow."

From that hour I regarded the master of Riverside with aversion. I had looked at a side of his character as revealed by George Curtain that before was an unrevealed page. Aimee had been left a solemn trust to his keeping, and he had used his influence to bend the girl to his wishes—to wed his son North. I noticed that Tremont Edford's sorrow at his fair ward's death was short-lived. Within a week he was spending money at places of questionable resort, and carrying himself in anything but a becoming manner, so soon after what should have been a great bereavement.

In order to carry out my plans, I fell in with his mood, and was a companion on some of his visits to the low places of the city. When in wine, Mr. Edford was often very communicative.

As may be supposed, Tremont Edford did not rise in my estimation on account of his conversation and actions while in liquor.

I learned much from Tremont Edford that disgusted me. There was little refinement in his nature, and as time passed he did not improve, but became far worse.

"Of one thing I am convinced," said Curtain one morning, as we stood together under a tree not far from Riverside.

"What is that?"

"North Edford had no hand in his cousin's destruction. I will give him credit for possessing a heart. I have seen enough to convince me that he deprecates his father's late shameful course, and would prevent it if he could."

"I believe the time has come to strike, George," said I. "I do not believe we shall ever get any direct evidence on this case. If Aimee was murdered, no one in the world save herself and assassin witnessed the deed. Now, there is but one living witness to the affair—the assassin himself. How can he be convicted?"

"It seems to be a bad case, Mr. Sharp."

"It is. But one way remains—the murderer must make a confession."

"He will not be likely to do that."

"That remains to be seen. You were acquainted with the former owner of Riverside?"

"I have seen him many times."

I then went on and laid my plan in completeness before the young mechanic. He listened attentively, and approved of it at the end.

"I am very much afraid it will not work, yet it is, perhaps, the only way," said George Curtain, after a brief reflection. "When will you try the experiment?"

"To-night."

"Very good. I will be on hand to render what assistance I can."

I had learned much of the habits of Tremont Edford during my few weeks' sojourn at Riverside. I made the discovery that the grand room, with its high ceiling and picture-hung walls, where the tragedy had occurred, was a place of nightly resort for the master, whether drunk or sober. He occupied the room alone, and never permitted visitors. This singular edict was a help to me in my plans.

The night in question proved to be a stormy one—another favorable omen. Thunder boomed along the black vault of heaven, and ten thousand gleams of electricity seemed to dart at once in zig-zag course across the clouds.

North had retired when his father returned from the city in a covered carriage. The hour was late—nearly midnight, and when the master of Riverside crossed the threshold and shook the rain-drops from his greatcoat, his face looked pallid and drawn in the lamplight. His step was unsteady, indicating that he had made a day of it in Richmond.

In a little time, through the assistance of a colored servant, he was comfortably ensconced in an arm-chair, in dressing-gown and slippers, a glowing fire before him, a glass of hot whisky at his right hand.

After sipping this, Edford rose to his feet, lighted a candle, and entered the hall. In a little time he crossed the threshold of the art room.

He had crossed half the carpet, one foot already touching a stained spot in the carpet made by the dead girl's blood, and then——. Tremont Edford started back with a gasping cry, and his candle fell with a thud from his nerveless fingers.

A tremendous crash of thunder shook the old house. A white glare filled the room. Confronting Edford stood a tall, ghostly figure, with glazed, dead eyes staring from a pallid face directly into his.

"Heavens! Brother Norman!" welled from Edford's pallid lips, and then he cowered almost to the floor, completely paralyzed with fear.

"Aye!" uttered the ghost, in hollow accents. "I am here to demand my child. Where is she?"

Lower and lower cowered the master of Riverside. He was on his knees now, with livid face upturned, and hands clasped imploringly.

"Her blood is there! it will not wash out; you, Tremont, have murdered Aimee!"

A gurgling groan. Then:

"I did. I confess; but we quarreled and I struck harder than I meant. Have mercy!"

The confession had come. It was all I wanted, and I at once cast off my weird disguise and told George Curtain to come forward. The young man quickly obeyed, carrying in his hand a dark lantern which he had used for the occasion.

Turning the rays on the master's face revealed the fact that he lay insensible, with froth oozing from his lips. The ghostly visitor had indeed done its work effectually.

Tremont Edford recovered from that first fit, but the moment reason dawned he realized that he was doomed. His room was guarded while he lay on a sickbed, but the precaution proved an unnecessary one, since he cheated the gallows by dying in bed in a most horrible manner.

GOOD READING

In filing the annual report with the new legislature, at Albany, N. Y., the State Athletic Commission will show that since the boxing law went into effect in August, 1911, about \$110,000 has been paid into the State comptroller's office, this money being the amount of the five-per-cent tax on the gross receipts of all licensed clubs operating under the statute. There has been a falling off in receipts during the last year, due probably to the poor quality of many so-called star bouts.

Yielding to persons who have faith in the old superstitions, the authorities of Aurora, Ill., have photographed the eye of Theresa Hollander. State Attorney Tyler admitted this to-day, saying that it was the belief of many that the retina of a murdered person retained the image of the murderer. Miss Hollander was beaten to death in a cemetery in Aurora recently. The picture was taken after a suggestion of an oculist, who asserted with emphasis that the retina of the slain girl's eye would show the last object before her conscious vision. The photograph was made the day after the murder as the body was being cared for at a local undertaker's. The authorities rather feared they would be ridiculed for this effect, but were anxious to leave nothing undone to get evidence, so went through the performance, holding every actor in the scene to the most profound secrecy.

William Shotten is known as the "Boy Captain." His exploits were the talk of all England, although he was only eighteen years of age. The story of his adventure is briefly this: The ship *Trafalgar* was sailing from Batavia to Melbourne, in ballast. The crew consisted of twenty-three hands. Captain Edward, who had command, died of Java fever. Mr. Roberts, who had been first mate, assumed command. A new first mate was secured, a seaman from the fore-castle was made second mate, and Mr. Shotten third mate. Three days after the *Trafalgar* had left Batavia, Java fever broke out on board ship. Mr. Roberts and the first mate died of it, as well as several of the sailors. The result being that the crew was totally demoralized, and William Shotten was the only man on board who knew anything of navigation. Few of the men had confidence in the young captain, but after a six weeks' voyage he brought the vessel safely into port, at Melbourne. Had it not been for his presence, the ship would have been lost. The voyage was an eventful one. Not a vessel was sighted, until near Melbourne, a good deal of rough weather was encountered, and on these occasions sails were blown away.

The reason man has so much trouble with his teeth is that Nature has concluded teeth are an extravagance for human beings and she is taking them away from him. This is the theory of Dr. Lloyd Marix, a London physician, who believes that man will eventually become toothless as

a baby and be glad of it. When man cracked nuts and bones and gnawed roots, to say nothing of his enemy's jugular vein, he had little or no tooth trouble. His jaw was at least a third bigger and protruded beyond his chin and even his nose. The teeth themselves were big, hard and more numerous. But Nature has given the man of to-day a bigger body, and what is still more costly of energy—a bigger brain. She has economized where she could, taking toll from hair, teeth, nails, appendix, anything that could be spared. A hairless, toothless race without toe or finger nails will be the final result, according to Dr. Marix. The gums will probably increase in height and act as a brace to the lips and be available in the way of substitutes for teeth as organs of speech. Absence of teeth should be a blessing, because by that time man is certain to have his chewing, and doubtless, at least, part of his digesting done for him by machinery. Dentists, barbers and manicures will turn to more productive forms of labor, preceded probably by soldiers, lawyers and others who make their living on human misery.

Nearly three-quarters of the area of the United States is "dry" territory, says the *World's Work*. Half the American people live out of reach of a licensed saloon. This is in a large measure the work of the Anti-saloon League, the militant church in practical politics. The league has done more in twenty years than the Prohibition party has in fifty. For twenty years it has been testing and proving the efficiency of its political methods, until now it can forecast with a reasonable degree of certainty just what the people of any given part of the United States will do with the prohibition question whenever it is made an issue. It has become probably the most active and effective agency in the country. When the league was organized twenty years ago, outside of a few thinly populated prohibition States, there was hardly a spot on the map of the United States where liquor was not sold openly and legally. To-day 72 per cent. of the total area of the United States—2,180,746 square miles—is "dry" territory. There are nine States in which it is illegal to sell liquor anywhere in the Commonwealth: Georgia, Kansas, Maine, Mississippi, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Tennessee, West Virginia. There are ten other States in which more than 90 per cent. of the total area is "dry." These States are: Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Kentucky, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Utah, Vermont, Wyoming. Arkansas has just passed a law requiring a petition to be signed by all the adult white men and women in any community before a saloon can be opened, practically insuring Statewide prohibition. On the other hand, there is not a single State that is entirely "wet." New Jersey comes nearest, with only 4-10 of 1 per cent. of its area prohibition. Three-quarters of Pennsylvania is "license" territory. But Illinois and Missouri are each 72 per cent. "dry," and 58 per cent. of New York State is prohibition territory.

ARTICLES OF ALL KINDS

ATHLETE LOSES FINGER.

John P. Lauler, of the Irish-American Athletic Association, of Boston, winner of second place in the 24-pound shot and third in tossing the 56-pound weight at the national indoor championships at New York, has undergone the amputation of the middle finger of his right hand in the belief that his work with the weight will be improved thereby. Several years ago he broke the finger and the bone knitted together badly, causing the digit to be stiff and rest diagonally across the others. When he started putting the shot he found the deformed finger bothered him greatly. Nevertheless, he won the New England championship title, although getting only second in New York. Lauler believes that with the finger amputated he will eventually be able to equal the world's record with the shot for distance and with the weight for height. The operation was performed at the Boothby Hospital, Boston.

ALL ON ONE PLATE.

The drummer from New York was making his first trip through Maine and had traveled up into the Aroostook region, where the towns are small and far apart and the chief products potatoes and Christmas trees. Here he stopped over night in a hamlet that possessed merely a very primitive inn. At dinner there was no soup, but he was served with fish. Then instead of his plate being changed the waitress came with a platter of meat and placed a generous helping carefully on one side of the fish bones. The drummer did not balk at that, for he was very hungry and ready to pass over almost anything for the sake of a good meal, and he thought it might be the regular Maine style. Presently, however, the girl brought in another platter full of pieces of pie and one of these she slid off on the same plate. Then the traveler thought it time to call a halt, for he had not yet become used to pie with fish flavor. The serving maid was a bit uncertain whether he could have the clean plate he requested and called the landlord in, to whom the guest explained his trouble. The host listened attentively, but when the drummer finished he withered that modest New Yorker with a scowl and demanded: "What do you want of all them different plates, anyway? Have you got partitions on your insides?" And the drummer, realizing that the hotel was charging him only \$2.00 a day, which had been extracted in advance, meekly subsided and ate his pie humbly.

BIRD LIFE IN THE CANAL ZONE.

It probably will surprise many readers to learn that the narrow strip of land known as the Panama Canal Zone contains a greater variety of bird life than any State in the Union. The current issue of the Canal Record, published by the Isthmian Canal Commission, says that from various sources short lists of the bird species had been recorded from time to time, but that prior to the construction of the Panama Railroad such lists were neither complete nor authentic. All scientific handling of the

subject was left to the years succeeding the opening of the railroad in 1855. Since that time collectors have made much progress in recording the ornithological history of the Isthmus. About 900 different species have so far been discovered. Lion Hill, one of the settlements on the old line of the Panama Railroad, now a small island in Gatun Lake, is said to have furnished more type species of birds than any other one locality in the Americas. E. A. Goldman, of the Biological Survey at Washington, has made two short collecting trips to Panama within the last few years and procured about 300 different species of birds in the Zone. L. L. Jewel, a private collector, has recorded about 250 different species found in the immediate vicinity of Gatun. Robert Ridgeway's work on the birds of North and Central America, now in the course of publication, will contain, it is said, practically all the authentic records as far south as the line of the Panama Railroad. This work is purely scientific; the economic and popular side of local bird life has not yet been treated in any published work.

SPIDER THE COMPETITOR OF SILK WORM.

A chemical analysis of the spider's web shows that it possesses almost precisely the same qualities as the finest silk. For centuries it has been the dream of ambitious scientists to devise some means of making the spider take the silk worm's place. New hope that this dream will be realized, that some day spiders will be furnishing the fabric for our shirts and dresses, is given by some interesting investigations which Dr. Ernst Voges, a German scientist, has been making. Dr. Voges finds the spider's weaving apparatus one of the most intricate and perfect devices in the animal world. It comprises no less than seven hundred spools and bobbins, so tiny that they can be seen only under a microscope magnifying two hundred diameters. The threads which the spider produces so rapidly and in such large quantities are formed in this way: The pressure of muscles force from little gland sacks a thick, oily fluid. This is the raw material for the web. The air quickly hardens this into a rude sort of fibre. This can be brought to any desired degree of thinness by winding it over and under the various spools and bobbins. In its feet, armed with a number of pointed claws, the spider really has an efficient little spinning comb. This draws the thread from the spools when it has been spun out to the right size for the use to which it is to be put. Three centuries ago a French nobleman succeeded in producing enough spider webs to make a pair of gloves and some stockings. They were of the texture of the finest silk and attracted much attention when exhibited at the French Academy of Sciences. Many years later a Spaniard devised an ingenious method of drawing out the thread from the spider's bobbins. Several Germans are now working along similar lines in the effort to make the spider an active competitor of the silk worm. One of them has over two thousand carefully selected spiders for use in his experiment.

DELUSION TRICK.

A magic little box in three parts that is very mystifying to those not in the trick. A coin placed on a piece of paper disappears by dropping a nickel ring around it from the magic box. Made of hard wood two inches in diameter. Price, 12c.

M. V. GALLIGAN, 419 W. 56th St., N. Y.

ITCH POWDER.



Gee whiz! What fun you can have with this stuff. Moisten the tip of your finger, tap it on the contents of the box, and a little bit will stick. Then shake hands with your friend, or drop a speck down his back. In a minute he will feel as if he had the seven years' itch.

It will make him scratch, rear, squirm and make faces. But it is perfectly harmless, as it is made from the seeds of wild roses. The horrible itch stops in a few minutes, or can be checked immediately by rubbing the spot with a wet cloth. While it is working, you will be apt to laugh your suspender buttons off. The best joke of all. Price 10 cents a box, by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

COMICAL RUBBER STAMPS.



A complete set of five grotesque little people made of indestructible rubber mounted on black walnut blocks. The figures consist of Policeman, Chinaman, and other laughable figures as shown in pictures. As each figure is mounted on a separate block, any boy can set up a regular parade or circus by printing the figures in different positions. With each set of figures we send a bottle of colored ink, an ink pad and full instructions. Children can stamp these pictures on their toys, picture books, writing paper and envelopes, and they are without doubt the most amusing and entertaining novelty gotten up in years. Price of the complete set of Rubber Stamps, with ink and ink pad, only .0c., 3 sets for 25c., one dozen 90c., by mail postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

JUMPING TELESCOPE.



This is an oblong tube in exact imitation of a telescope. By looking through it, reveals one highly magnified picture of a dancer or other subject. It contains on the side a button, which the victim is told to press for a change of picture. Instead of another picture appearing, the entire inside part shoots out, as shown in illustration. It is entirely harmless, but gives the victim a genuine scare.

Price, 15c. each; 2 for 25c. by mail, postpaid. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

BUBBLE BLOWER.



With this device, a continuous series of bubbles can be blown. It is a wooden, cigar-shaped blower, enclosing a small vial, in which there is a piece of soap. The vial is filled with water, and a peculiarly perforated cork is inserted. When you blow in to the mouthpiece, it sets up a hydraulic pressure through the cork perforations and causes bubble after bubble to come out. No need of dipping into water once the little bottle is filled. Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

WHISTLEPHONE



This is one of the greatest musical instruments ever invented. It is made entirely of metal and is almost invisible when in use. With it, in a few moments, you can learn to play all kinds of tunes, have lots of fun, please and amuse your friends and make some money, too. Fine for either song or piano accompaniment or by itself alone. You place the whistlephone in the mouth with half circle out, place end of tongue to rounded part and blow gently as if to cool the lips. A few trials will enable one to play any tune or air.

Price 6 cents each by mail, post-paid. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

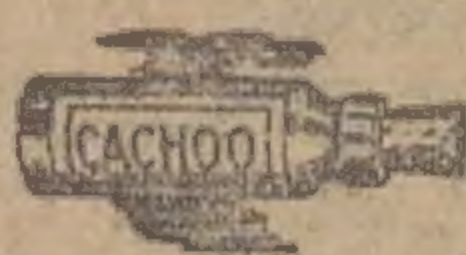
JUMPING CARD.—A



pretty little trick, easy to perform. Effect: A selected card returned to the deck jumps high into the air at the performer's command. Pack is held in one hand. Price of apparatus, with enough cards to perform the trick, 10c.

M. V. GALLIGAN, 419 W. 56th St., N. Y.

CACHOO OR SNEEZING POWDER.



The greatest fun-maker of them all. A small amount of this powder, when blown in a room, will cause everyone to sneeze without anyone knowing where it comes from. It is very light, will float in the air for some time, and penetrate every nook and corner of a room. It is perfectly harmless. Cachoo is put up in bottles, and one bottle contains enough to be used from 10 to 15 times. Price by mail, 10c. each; 3 for 25c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

TRICK FAN.



A lady's fan made of colored silk cloth. The fan may be used and then shut, and when it opens again, it falls in pieces; shut and open again and it is perfect, without a sign of a break. A great surprise for those not in the trick. Price, 35c. by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

SURPRISE KINEMATOGRAPH.



The greatest hit of the season! It consists of a small metal, nickeled tube, with a lens eye view, which shows a pretty ballet girl in tights. Hand it to a friend, who will be delighted with the first picture; tell him to turn the screw in center of instrument to change the views, when a stream of water squirts into his face, much to his disgust. Anyone who has not seen this kinematograph in operation is sure to be caught every time. The instrument can be refilled with water in an instant, ready for the next customer. Price 25c. by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

SURPRISE LETTER DRUM.



Stung! That was one on you! The joke? You send a friend a letter. He opens it, and that releases the drum. Instantly the sheet of note paper begins to bang and thump furiously, with a ripping, tearing sound. Guaranteed to make a man with iron nerves almost jump out of his skin. You can catch the sharpest wisenheimer with this one. Don't miss getting a few. Price, 6c. each by mail.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

CARTER AEROPLANE No. 1.



Will fly on a horizontal line 150 feet! Can be flown in the house, and will not injure itself nor anything in the room. The most perfect little aeroplane made. The motive power is furnished by twisted rubber bands contained within the tubular body of the machine. It is actuated by a propeller at each end revolving in opposite directions. Variation in height may be obtained by moving the planes and the balance weight. It can be made to fly either to the right or the left by moving the balance side-wise before it is released for flight. Price, 35c. each, delivered.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

GOOD LUCK PUZZLE.



It consists of three horseshoes fastened together. Only a very clever person can take off the closed horseshoe from the two linked horseshoes. But it can be done in a moment when the secret is known. Price, by mail, 10c. each.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

MICROSCOPE.



By use of this wonderful little microscope you can magnify a drop of stagnant water until you see dozens of crawling insects; is also useful for inspecting grain, pork, linen, and numerous other articles. This little instrument does equally as good work as the best microscopes and is invaluable to the household. Is made of best finished brass; size when closed 1x2 1/2 inches. Price, 30c.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.



STAMP COLLECTING is interesting, instructive and profitable. Only 10c. starts you with Album and 528 stamps, including Rhodesia, Jamaica (Waterfalls), China (Dragon), Malay (Tiger), etc. Big lists and \$3 Coupons Free! We Buy Stamps. Hussman Stamp Co., Dept. U, St. Louis, Mo.

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Send 10 cents today and get all eight games. V. A. TOWNSEND, Doylestown, Ohio

VOICE THROWER 10c

Wonderful instrument that creates a new vocal power. Sounds appear to come from a great distance away. Held unseen in the mouth. Mystifies everybody. Send a dime for yours today. Our great catalog of Magic and Mystery included free. MCKINLEY CO., WINONA, MINN.

LOTS OF FUN FOR A DIME

Ventriloquist Double Throat. Fits roof of mouth; always invisible; greatest thing yet. Astonish and mystify your friends. Neigh like a horse; whine like a puppy; sing like a canary, and imitate birds and beasts of the field and forest. Loads of fun. Wonderful invention. Thousands sold. Price: only 10 cents; 4 for 25 cents, or 12 for 50 cents. Double Throat Co. Opt. & Frenchtown, N.J.

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Have imported roller chains, sprockets and pedals; New Departure Coaster-Brakes and Hubs; Puncture Proof Tires; highest grade equipment and many advanced features possessed by no other wheels. Guaranteed 5 yrs.

FACTORY PRICES direct to you. Others ask for cheap wheels. Other reliable models from \$12 up. A few good second-hand machines \$3 to \$8.

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BE A HANDCUFF KING! ENORMOUS SALARIES paid in Vaudeville. Interesting, mystifying. Full instructions 25c. Particulars free.

JAMES E. CARR, 3921 N. Scott Ave., Chicago, Ill.

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MAGIC FREE. Send the names and addresses of 10 of your friends and 8 red stamps, and we will mail you the finest 25c. magic trick you ever saw. HUMPH NOVELTY CO., 500 S. Madison Street, Bellefontaine, O.

SNAKES IN THE GRASS



Something entirely new, consisting of six large cones, each one nearly one inch in height. Upon lighting one of these cones with a match, you see something similar to a 4th of July exhibition of fireworks. Sparks fly in every direction, and as the cone burns down it throws out and is surrounded with what appears to be grass; at the same time a large snake uncoils himself from the burning cone and lazily stretches out in the grass, which at last burns to ashes but the snake remains as a curiosity unharmed. They are not at all dangerous and can be set off in the parlor if placed on some metal surface that will not burn. An ordinary dust pan answers the purpose nicely. Price of the six cones, packed in sawdust, in a strong wooden box, only 10c., 3 boxes for 25c., 1 dozen boxes 75c., sent by mail postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

LITTLE CLINCHERS



With a pair of these creepers clinched on your shoes you can defy the slipperiest ice or snow. No matter how slippery the road or how steep the hill, these claws of steel will carry you safely over them. A child can adjust them in 30 seconds. No nails, straps, screws or rivets are needed. They will not injure your shoes. No need to remove them indoors—simply fold the heel-plate forward, reversing the spikes under the instep. They are comfortable, durable and invisible. Just the thing for postmen, golfers, hunters, woodsmen, brakemen, miners and all who would insure life and limb in winter weather. 25 cents a pair, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.



GOOD LUCK BANKS.

Ornamental as well as useful. Made of highly nickeled brass. It holds just One Dollar. When filled it opens itself. Remains locked until refilled. Can be used as a watchcharm. Money refunded if not satisfied. Price, 10c. by mail.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

THE ELK HEAD PUZZLE.



Just out, and one of the most fascinating puzzles on the market. The stunt is to separate the antlers and rejoin them. It looks easy, but try it and you will admit that it is without exception the best puzzle you have ever seen. You can't leave it alone. Made of silvered metal. Price, 12c.; 3 for 30c., sent by mail, postpaid. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

THE FIGHTING ROOSTERS.



A full blooded pair of fighting game cocks. These diminutive fighters have real feathers, yellow legs and fiery red combs, their movements when fighting are perfectly natural and lifelike, and the secret of their movements is known only to the operator, who can cause them to battle with each other as often and as long as desired. Independent of their fighting proclivities they make very pretty mantel ornaments. Price for the pair in a strong box, 10c.; 3 pairs for 25c. by mail, postpaid. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.



GIANT SAW PUZZLE.

This puzzle contains twenty-one pieces of wood nicely finished; take them apart and put them together same as illustrated. Everybody would like to try it, as it is very fascinating. Price, by mail, postpaid, 25c. each.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

VANISHING CIGAR.



This cigar is made in exact imitation of a good one. It is held by a rubber cord which, with the attached safety pin, is fastened on the inside of the sleeve. When offered to a friend, as it is about to be taken, it will instantly disappear.

Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid. C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

THE GERMAN OCARINO.



A handsome metal instrument, made in Germany, from which peculiar but sweet music can be produced. Its odd shape, which resembles a torpedo boat, will attract much attention. We send instructions with each instrument, by the aid of which anyone can in a short time play any tune and produce very sweet music on this odd-looking instrument. Price, 10c. by mail, postpaid. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

THE PEG JUMPER.



A very effective pocket trick, easily to be performed by any one. A miniature paddle is shown. Central holes are drilled through it. A wooden peg is inside of the upper hole. Showing now both sides of the paddle, the performer causes, by simply breathing upon it, the peg to leave the upper hole, and appear in the middle one. Then it jumps to the lower hole, back to the middle one, and lastly to the upper hole. Both sides of the paddle are repeatedly shown. Price by mail, 15c. C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

MANY TOOL KEY RING.



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